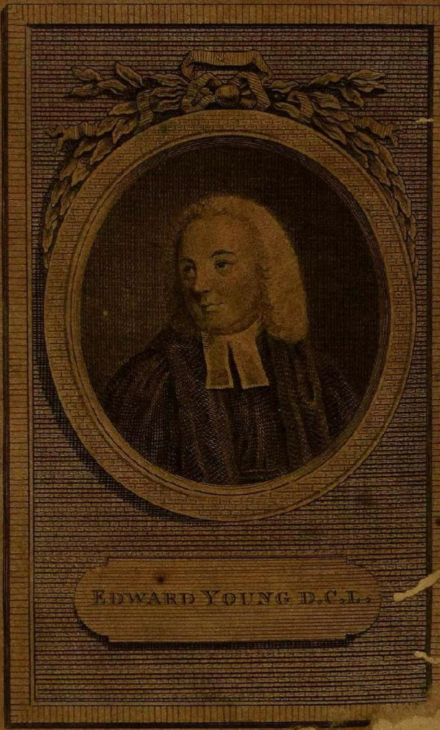

Printed for John Bell near Exeter Exchange,

rinted for ... r Exchange Strand London Oct[br] 10th 1777

THE POETICAL WORKS OF THE REVEREND DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

IN FOUR VOLUMES.

WITH THE LIFE OF THE AUTHOR.

When flatter'd crimes of a licentious age
Reproach our filence, and demand our rage;
When purchas'd follies, from each diftant land,
Like arts, improve in Britain's fkilful hand;
When the Law fhews her teeth, but dares not bite,
And South-fea treafures are not brought to light;
When Churchmen Scripture for the Claffics quit,
Polite apoftates from God's grace to wit;
When men grow great from their revenue fpent,
And fly from bailiffs into parliament;
When dying finners, to blot out their fcore,
Bequeath the Church the leavings of a whore:
To chafe our fpleen, when themes like thefe increafe,
Shall panegyric reign, and cenfure ceafe!---
Shall authors fmile on fuch illuftrious days,
And fatirize with nothing---but their praife? SAT. I.

VOL. I.

EDINBURG:
AT THE Apollo Prefs, BY THE MARTINS.
Anno 1777.

THE

POETICAL WORKS

OF THE REVEREND

DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

VOL. I.

CONTAINING HIS

COMPLAINT:

OR,

NIGHT-THOUGHTS

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Sunt lacrymae rerum, et mentem mortalia tangunt. VIRG.

Thro' many a field of moral and divine
The Muse has stray'd, and much of sorrow seen.----
O'er friends deceas'd full heartily she wept;
Of love divine the wonders she display'd;
Prov'd Man immortal; shew'd the source of joy;
The grand tribunal rais'd; assign'd the bounds
Of human grief. In few, to close the whole,
The moral Muse has shadow'd out a sketch,
Tho' not in form, nor with a Raphael stroke,
Of most our weakness needs believe or do,
In this our land of travail and of hope,
For peace on earth, or prospect of the skies. NIGHT IX.

EDINBURG:

AT THE Apollo Press, BY THE MARTINS.

Anno 1777.

DR. EDWARD YOUNG.

THERE is no remark more true, and none more trite, than that the lives of poets, of philosophers, of men of study, indeed, in general, seldom furnish materials for the pen of Biography, by any means so striking in themselves, or so interesting to the multitude of readers, as the lives of warriors, of statesmen, and such other characters as have been eminently distinguished in scenes of public activity and national enterprise. Of the literati, few ever mixed less, upon the whole, with what is termed *the world*, than the reverend and truly immortal Author of the Night-Thoughts; a circumstance in no ways to be regreted, however, when we reflect to what noble, to what god-like purposes he devoted all the solitary hours of a life lengthened to a period far beyond what man is commonly destined to enjoy.

This illustrious favourite of the Muses, and ornament of the present century, was the son of the Rev. Mr. Edward Young, a learned and pious divine of the Church of England, of whom there are still exant two volumes of sermons, which able judges have not scrupled to pronounce among the most valuable in our language.

The year in which our Poet was born seems not to be positively known, but in all probability it must have been in or about the 1679. Alike animated to excel

in virtue and to ſhine in literature, from the example and tuition of the beſt of fathers, he was, at an early age, matriculated into All-Soul's College, in Oxford, where, in the view of following the Civil law, he actually took a degree in that profeſſion.

In 1704, whilſt in this ſituation, he produced his celebrated poem on the Laſt Day, which, as being the pious, as well as maſterly compoſition of a young obſcure layman, became preſently a popular and generally-admired performance.

Soon after this he wrote the poem entitled, The Force of Religion: or, Vanquiſh'd Love; which was likewiſe received with very flattering marks of diſtinction. To the noble family for whoſe amuſement it was originally intended, this poem proved a moſt acceptable preſent; and indeed ſuch was the ſucceſs of both theſe juvenile performances, at a period when the nobleſt effuſions of genius were daily iſſuing from the preſs—when, in fact, the literature of England ſeemed to have reached the zenith of its glory, that ſeveral of the firſt characters in the kingdom not only loaded him with applauſe, but actually courted his confidence and friendſhip.

Ever ſtrongly inclined to the Church, from the natural bias of a mind formed for contemplation, our Author went into orders, and ſoon after we find him in poſſeſſion of the Rectory of Wellwyn in Hertfordſhire, worth about 500 *l. per annum*, and in the honourable liſt of King's Chaplains.

Though still caressed by the great, and apparently in the full blaze of court favour, it was yet the fortune of Dr. Young to obtain no higher clerical distinction. It must be allowed, indeed, that during that reign the arts of poetry, or of real eloquence, were but little promoted or encouraged from the throne: and indeed our Author could expect no great honours or emoluments from a master who hated poetry, and stigmatized all poets with the odious appellation of *buffoons.* Nevertheless, this disappointment he would not probably have experienced, had the Prince of Wales, by whom he was honoured with particular marks of regard, survived a little longer, or at least had he not been at such open variance with his royal father, and so avowed an enemy to all the then favourites and friends of the court. With the demise of his Royal Highness fell all the Doctor's hopes of advancement in the church were ruined, and even the desire of opulence seemed to forsake him: for in his Night-Thoughts, mentioning himself, he observes that there was

> [illegible] born, with courtiers bred,
> [illegible] wealth might come a day too late.

Notwithstanding, upon the death of Dr. Hales, he was taken into the service of the Princess Dowager of Wales and succeeded as her Privy Chaplain.

At an advanced period of life he married the Lady Elizabeth Lee, the daughter of the late Earl of Litchfield, and the widowed mother of two amiable chil-

dren, a son and a daughter, who both died young, and within a short time of each other. This melancholy interruption to his domestic happiness was almost immediately followed by the death of his wife, an aggravation of his sorrows which, in the poem quoted above, he thus bitterly bewails in an apostrophe to Death, one of the most animated of the kind perhaps in our language.

> Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?
> Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;
> And thrice, ere thrice yon' moon renew'd her horn.

Of all our Author's poetical performances, the Satires, entitled Love of Fame, The Universal Passion, have been generally considered as the most correct and finished, though written at an early period of life. By certain fastidious critics they have been stigmatized as a mere string of epigrams, which, however diversified, have still the same object in view, and, consequently, cannot fail to tire the reader before he has got through one half of them. We are, however, of opinion, that if simplicity of subject, elegance of style, and brilliancy of wit, be the grand *desiderata* in such compositions, the Satires of Dr. Young ensure applause; and that when even the great Dean Swift sarcastically observed of them, "that the Poet should "have been either more angry or more merry," he rather characterised his own disposition than the intrinsic merit of the poems, which, as the Author ob-

ferves in the preface, " have been favourably
" ved at home and abroad."

In 1719 our Author made his firft appearanc the train of Melpomene; and though Bufiris, hi effort in the line of tragedy, afforded but little p fure in the reprefentation, and is indeed freque tinctured with the falfe fublime, yet, coolly exa ed in the clofet, a reader of tafte will difcover in a number of admirable lines, of elevated fentimen.

His next, and confeffedly the beft of his tragic co pofitions, (fince it ftill continues a ftock play at t theatres) was The Revenge. For the idea of this play, which appears from the Annals of the Drama to have been acted in the fame year with Bufiris, our Poet is evidently indebted partly to the Othello of Shakefpeare, and partly to the Abdalazar of Mrs. Behn; on both which pieces he has indeed made many fkilful improvements. But the writer of Dr. Young's life, prefixed to the fifth volume of his works, London edit. 1773, probably goes too great a length when he fays, " We may affign this piece, with great juftice,
" a place in the firft rank of our dramatic writings;
" and [illegible]re we to point out to foreigners a tragedy
" as a [illegible]oof of Englifh genius, after two or three
" others, perhaps this might be confidered as a pro-
" per fpecimen."

But laft, and, according to the general voice, his leaft perfect tragedy, was The Brothers, a play writ-

pon the plan of a French piece of great merit; hough it brought but little addition to his fame Poet, did yet reflect much additional lustre on haracter as a Man, the emoluments arising from xhibition having been generously allotted by the hor to the purposes of public charity.

aving followed Dr. Young through his dramatic reer, let us now consider him as the moral and aintive, the pious but gloomy, Author of The ght-Thoughts; a work composed in a style so strict- peculiar to himself, that of the many efforts which ave been made to imitate it, none have proved in any degree successful. Than the Night-Thoughts never was any poem received with applause more general or unbounded. "The unhappy bard, whose grief "in melting numbers flows, and melancholy joys "diffuse around," has been sung by the profane as well as the pious. These, as already observed, were written under the recent, the overwhelming pressure of sorrow for the death of his wife, and of his daughter and son in law; the former of whom, though distinguished by no name, he often pathetically alludes to, while the two latter he beautifully character under the poetical appellations of Narcissa and P ander.

This sublime performance is addressed to Lorenzo, an infidel man of pleasure and dissipation; in a word, a mere man of the world. By Lorenzo, if general report says true, we are to understand his own son,

who, borne away by the paſſions too often fatal to youth, is well known to have long laboured under the heavy puniſhment of a father's juſt diſpleaſure. Whatever there may be in this, (and indeed it is of little moment to the public) every page of the poem abounds with the nobleſt flights of fancy—flights which, eſpecially in his deſcription of Death, in the act of noting down, from his ſecret ſtand, the exerciſes of a Bacchanalian ſociety; in his epitaph on the departed World; in the iſſuing of Satan from his dungeon on the day of judgment, and a few others, might tempt a reader of warm imagination to ſuppoſe the poet der the immediate inſpiration of the Divinity.

Uniformly a friend to virtue, and an indefatigable aſſertor of the dignity of human nature againſt all the cavils, not of the rude multitude only, but of many well-diſpoſed, though miſtaken and diſcontented moraliſts, in 1754, under the patronage of Queen Caroline, our Author publiſhed his Eſtimate of Human Life; a valuable tract, which, while it exhibits a ſtriking picture of the writer's pious benevolence and charity, evinces him to have been alike qualified to ſhine in proſe and verſe.—Of this piece, according to his own account of it, the grand ſcope is to remove a prevalent opinion, highly reflective on Providence, "That "this world is, in its own nature, (in other words, by "God's appointment) a world of miſery; and that "to be in it is to be wretched unavoidably."

In The Centaur not Fabulous, another of his profe pieces, our Author combats, with arguments the moft perfuafive, clothed in language the moft powerful, not only the prevailing vices of his own times, but the vices which, in the nature of things, always will prevail, till Senfuality fhall have loft her fway, and Virtue and Reafon fhall have eftablifhed their empire in the human breaft.

When turned of eighty, our Author publifhed (in the form of a letter addreffed to his friend, the celebrated editor of Sir Charles Grandifon) his Conjectures on Original Compofition; a performance which (it is more than conjecture to add) will for ever remain a fingular monument, that even at that age of general imbecillity and dotage, the intellectual powers of Dr. Young had apparently loft nothing of their wonted vigour.—" When we confider it as the work of a " man turned of eighty, (fays the writer of Young's " life, Biographical Dictionary, vol. 12th,) we are " not to be furprifed fo much that it has faults, as " how it fhould come to have beauties. It is indeed " ftrange that the load of fourfcore years was not " able to keep down that vigorous fancy, which here " burfts the bounds of judgment, and breaks the fla- " vifh fhackles of age and experience."

But, alas! the publication of this piece proved to be little more than as the fudden blaze of a taper ready to expire in its focket; and happy had it been for

the poetical fame of its Author, had his fubfequent and final production, entitled Refignation, been condemned to the flames. In juftice to that fame, however, it is proper to obferve that this poem would never have appeared, but for the indifcreet conduct of a few miftaken friends, who, having read it with pleafure in manufcript, thought no injury could accrue to the Author by clandeftinely publifhing fundry imperfect extracts from it in the papers.

But this failure in old age could no way diminifh the fame he had been earning by a life of more than fixty years of excellence. As a Poet, he was ftill confidered as the only Palladium of ancient genius we had left; and, as a Chriftian, one of the fineft examples of primeval piety. Of a turn of mind naturally grave, though untinctured with morofenefs, our Author, when at home in the country, commonly paffed a confiderable portion of the day in walking among the tombs in his own churchyard. In his converfation, his writings, and even in his horticular improvements, there was generally fome reference, more or lefs latent, to the future life of man *. Of the latter circumftance he

* The altar-piece in the church of Wellwyn is the moft curious in this or any other kingdom, being adorned with an elegant piece of needle work wrought by the Doctor's wife. In the middle is infcribed, in capital letters, the following fentence, *I am the bread of life*. On the north fide of the chancel is the following infcription, fuppofed to be placed there by the order of Dr. Young, *Virginibus*; "Increafe in fta-"ture and in wifdom." And on the fouth fide, *Puerifque*; "and in favour with God and man."

gave a ſtriking proof, in an alcove with a bench, a little way from his houſe, ſo painted, that at a diſtance it paſſed, with an unſuſpecting gazer, for a real one. On advancing more cloſely to it the illuſion was perceived, and, as a motto, appeared the words, *Inviſibilia non decipiunt*; "The things unſeen deceive us not." Yet, ſo far was he from gloomineſs of temper, he was fond of innocent ſports and amuſements; and not only inſtituted an aſſembly and bowling-green in the pariſh of which he was Rector, but frequently promoted the gaiety of the company in perſon.

Endowed with an uncommon wit, never was that wit more ſucceſsfully pointed than againſt thoſe who teſtified any contempt for decency or religion. His extempore epigram on M. de Voltaire, who happened, in our Author's preſence, to throw out a few idle ſneers at Milton, and the allegorical perſonages of Sin and Death, is well known. Young thus addreſſed him;

> Thou art ſo witty, profligate, and thin:
> You ſeem a Milton, with his Death and Sin.

Of his ſenſibility we may likewiſe judge from an anecdote recorded of him in his clerical capacity. One Sunday, when preaching officially at St. James's, finding every effort to command the attention of his polite auditory ineffectual, pity for their infatuation got the better of decorum, and, ſeating himſelf back in the pulpit, he burſt into a flood of tears.

Towards the cloſe of his life, ſenſible of his ſtill-in-

creaſing infirmities, he ſuffered himſelf to be in a kind of pupilage; for he conſidered that at a certain time of life the ſecond childhood of age demanded its wonted protection. His ſon, whoſe juvenile follies were long obnoxious to parental ſeverity, was at laſt forgiven, and, a few legacies excepted, ſucceeded, by will, to the whole of his father's fortune. This great and good man, (having previouſly ordered all his papers to be burned) after having performed all that man could do to fill his poſt with dignity, regreted by all, full of years, and loaded with honours, breathed his laſt on the 5th of April 1765.

Thoſe who know how much our Author comprifed in a ſmall compaſs, and who recollect that he never employed his pen but on ſubjects of importance, with ſuch the irreparable loſs of his manuſcripts will be ever regreted; more eſpecially when it is conſidered that he was the particular friend of Addiſon, whom he occaſionally aſſiſted in the Spectator, and, excepting the late Dr. Pearce, Biſhop of Rocheſter, was the only ſurviving genius of that incomparable group of authors who rendered the reign of Queen Anne illuſtrious in the annals of literature.

VERSES TO THE AUTHOR.

Now let the Atheiſt tremble: thou alone
Canſt bid his conſcious heart the Godhead own.
Whom ſhalt thou not reform? O thou haſt ſeen
How God deſcends to judge the ſouls of men.
Thou heardſt the ſentence how the guilty mourn,
Driv'n out from God, and never to return.
Yet more, behold ten thouſand thunders fall,
And ſudden vengeance wrap the flaming ball.
When Nature ſunk, when every bolt was hurl'd,
Thou ſaw'ſt the boundleſs ruins of the world.
When guilty Sodom felt the burning rain,
And ſulphur fell on the devoted plain,
The Patriarch thus, the fiery tempeſt paſt,
With pious horror view'd the deſert waſte;
The reſtleſs ſmoke ſtill wav'd its curls around,
For ever riſing from the glowing ground.
But tell me, oh! what heav'nly pleaſure, tell,
To think ſo greatly, and deſcribe ſo well!
How waſt thou pleas'd the wondrous theme to try,
And find the thought of man could riſe ſo high?
Beyond this world the labour to purſue,
And open all eternity to view?
But thou are beſt delighted to rehearſe
Heav'n's holy dictates in exalted verſe.

O thou haſt power the harden'd heart to warm,
To grieve, to raiſe, to terrify, to charm;
To fix the ſoul on God; to teach the mind
To know the dignity of human-kind;
By ſtricter rules well-govern'd life to ſcan,
And practiſe o'er the angel in the man

Magd. Col.
Oxon.

T. WARTON.

TO A LADY, WITH THE LAST DAY.

MADAM,

Here ſacred truths, in lofty numbers told,
The proſpect of a future ſtate unfold;
The realms of night to mortal view diſplay,
And the glad regions of eternal day.
This daring Author ſcorns, by vulgar ways
Of guilty wit, to merit worthleſs praiſe.
Full of her glorious theme, his tow'ring Muſe,
With gen'rous zeal, a nobler fame purſues:
Religion's cauſe her raviſh'd heart inſpires,
And with a thouſand bright ideas fires;
Tranſports her quick, impatient, piercing eye,
O'er the ſtrait limits of mortality
To boundleſs orbs, and bids her fearleſs ſoar,
Where only Milton gain'd renown before;
Where various ſcenes alternately excite
Amazement, pity, terror, and delight.

Thus did the Muſes ſing in early times,
Ere ſkill'd to flatter vice, and varniſh crimes:
Their lyres were tun'd to virtuous ſongs alone,
And the chaſte poet and the prieſt were one:
But now, forgetful of their infant ſtate,
They ſooth the wanton pleaſures of the great;
And from the preſs, and the licentious ſtage,
With luſcious poiſon taint the thoughtleſs age:
Deceitful charms attract our wond'ring eyes,
And ſpecious ruin unſuſpected lies.
So the rich ſoil of India's blooming ſhores,
Adorn'd with laviſh Nature's choiceſt ſtores,
Where ſerpents lurk, by flow'rs conceal'd from ſight,
Hides fatal danger under gay delight.
These purer thoughts from groſs alloys refin'd,
With heav'nly raptures elevate the mind:
Not fram'd to raiſe a giddy, ſhort-liv'd joy,
Whoſe falſe allurements, while they pleaſe, deſtroy;
But bliſs reſembling that of ſaints above,
Sprung from the viſion of th' Almighty Love:
Firm, ſolid bliſs, for ever great and new,
The more 'tis known, the more admir'd, like you;
Like you, fair Nymph! in whom united meet
Endearing ſweetneſs, unaffected wit,
And all the glories of your ſparkling race,
While inward virtues heighten ev'ry grace.
By theſe ſecur'd, you will with pleaſure read
Of future judgment, and the riſing dead;

Of time's grand period, heav'n and earth o'erthrown;
And gaſping Nature's laſt tremendous groan.
Theſe, when the ſtars and ſun ſhall be no more,
Shall beauty to your ravag'd form reſtore:
Then ſhall you ſhine with an immortal ray,
Improv'd by death, and brighten'd by decay.

Pemb. Col.
Oxon.

T. TRISTRAM.

TO THE AUTHOR,

On his Laſt Day, and Univerſal Paſſion.

And muſt it be as thou haſt ſung,
Celeſtial Bard, ſeraphic Young!
Will there no trace, no point be found
Of all this ſpacious glorious round?
Yon' lamps of light muſt they decay?
On Nature's ſelf Deſtruction prey?
Then fame, the moſt immortal thing
Ev'n thou canſt hope, is on the wing.
Shall Newton's ſyſtem be admir'd
When time and motion are expir'd?
Shall ſouls be curious to explore
Who rul'd an orb that is no more?
Or ſhall they quote the pictur'd age,
From Pope's and thy corrective page,
When vice and virtue loſe their name
In deathleſs joy or endleſs ſhame?

While wears away the grand machine,
The works of genius ſhall be ſeen:
Beyond, what laurels can there be
For Homer, Horace, Pope, or thee?
Thro' life we chaſe, with fond purſuit,
What mocks our hope, like Sodom's fruit;
And, ſure, thy plan was well deſign'd
To cure this madneſs of the mind;
Firſt beyond time our thoughts to raiſe,
Then laſh our love of tranſient praiſe;
In both we own thy doctrine juſt,
And fame's a breath, and men are duſt.

1736. J. BANCKS.

THE COMPLAINT.

PREFACE.

AS the occasion of this Poem was real, not fictitious, so the method pursued in it was rather imposed, by what spontaneously arose in the Author's mind on that occasion, than meditated or designed; which will appear very probable from the nature of it; for it differs from the common mode of poetry, which is, from long narrations to draw short morals: here, on the contrary, the narrative is short, and the morality arising from it makes the bulk of the Poem. The reason of it is, that the facts mentioned did naturally pour these moral reflections on the thought of the writer.

NIGHT I.

ON LIFE, DEATH, AND IMMORTALITY.

Humbly inscribed to the

RIGHT HON. ARTHUR ONSLOW, ESQ.

Speaker of the House of Commons.

TIR'D Nature's sweet restorer, balmy Sleep!
He, like the world, his ready visit pays
Where Fortune smiles; the wretched he forsakes:
Swift on his downy pinion flies from woe,
And lights on lids unsully'd with a tear.

From ſhort (as uſual) and diſturb'd repoſe
I wake: how happy they who wake no more!
Yet that were vain, if dreams infeſt the grave.
I wake, emerging from a ſea of dreams
Tumultuous; where my wreck'd deſponding thought
From wave to wave of fancy'd miſery
At random drove, her helm of reaſon loſt.
Tho' now reſtor'd, 'tis only change of pain,
(A bitter change!) ſeverer for ſevere:
The day too ſhort for my diſtreſs; and night,
Ev'n in the zenith of her dark domain,
Is ſunſhine to the colour of my fate.
Night, ſable goddeſs! from her ebon throne,
In rayleſs majeſty, now ſtretches forth
Her leaden ſceptre o'er a ſlumb'ring world.
Silence how dead! and darkneſs how profound!
Nor eye nor liſt'ning ear an object finds;
Creation ſleeps. 'Tis as the gen'ral pulſe
Of life ſtood ſtill, and nature made a pauſe;
An awful pauſe! prophetic of her end.
And let her propheſy be ſoon fulfill'd:
Fate! drop the curtain; I can loſe no more.
Silence and Darkneſs! ſolemn ſiſters! twins
From ancient Night, who nurſe the tender thought
To reaſon, and on reaſon build reſolve,
(That column of true majeſty in man)
Aſſiſt me: I will thank you in the grave;
The grave your kingdom: there this frame ſhall fall

A victim ſacred to your dreary ſhrine.
But what are ye?——
  Thou, who didſt put to flight
Primeval Silence, when the morning ſtars,
Exulting, ſhouted o'er the riſing ball;
O Thou! whoſe word from ſolid darkneſs ſtruck
That ſpark, the ſun, ſtrike wiſdom from my ſoul;
My ſoul, which flies to thee, her truſt, her treaſure,
As miſers to their gold, while others reſt.
  Thro' this opaque of nature and of ſoul,
This double night, tranſmit one pitying ray,
To lighten and to cheer. O lead my mind,
(A mind that fain would wander from its woe)
Lead it thro' various ſcenes of life and death,
And from each ſcene the nobleſt truths inſpire.
Nor leſs inſpire my conduct than my ſong;
Teach my beſt reaſon reaſon; my beſt will
Teach rectitude; and fix my firm reſolve
Wiſdom to wed, and pay her long arrear:
Nor let the phial of thy vengeance, pour'd
On this devoted head, be pour'd in vain.
  The bell ſtrikes one. We take no note of time
But from its loſs: to give it then a tongue
Is wiſe in man. As if an angel ſpoke
I feel the ſolemn ſound. If heard aright,
It is the knell of my departed hours.
Where are they? With the years beyond the flood.
It is the ſignal that demands diſpatch;

How much is to be done? My hopes and fears
Start up alarm'd, and o'er life's narrow verge
Look down—on what? A fathomleſs abyſs.
A dread eternity! how ſurely mine!
And can eternity belong to me,
Poor penſioner on the bounties of an hour?
 How poor, how rich, how abject, how auguſt,
How complicate, how wonderful, is man!
How paſſing wonder He who made him ſuch!
Who cent'red in our make ſuch ſtrange extremes
From diff'rent natures marvelouſly mix'd,
Connexion exquiſite of diſtant worlds!
Diſtinguiſh'd link in being's endleſs chain!
Midway from nothing to the Deity!
A beam ethereal, ſully'd and abſorpt!
Tho' ſully'd and diſhonour'd, ſtill divine!
Dim minature of greatneſs abſolute!
An heir of glory! a frail child of duſt!
Helpleſs immortal! inſect infinite!
A worm! a god!—I tremble at myſelf,
And in myſelf am loſt. At home a ſtranger,
Thought wanders up and down, ſurpris'd, aghaſt,
And wond'ring at her own. How reaſon reels?
O what a miracle to man is man!
Triumphantly diſtreſs'd! what joy! what dread!
Alternately tranſported and alarm'd!
What can preſerve my life! or what deſtroy!
An angel's arm can't ſnatch me from the grave;

Legions of angels can't confine me there.
'Tis paſt conjecture; all things riſe in proof.
While o'er my limbs Sleep's ſoft dominion ſpread,
What tho' my ſoul fantaſtic meaſures trod
O'er fairy fields, or mourn'd along the gloom
Of pathleſs woods, or down the craggy ſteep
Hurl'd headlong, ſwam with pain the mantled pool,
Or ſcal'd the cliff, or danc'd on hollow winds
With antic ſhapes, wild natives of the brain!
Her ceaſeleſs flight, tho' devious, ſpeaks her nature
Of ſubtler eſſence than the trodden clod;
Active, aërial, tow'ring, unconfin'd,
Unfetter'd with her groſs companion's fall.
Ev'n ſilent night proclaims my ſoul immortal;
Ev'n ſilent night proclaims eternal day.
For human weal Heav'n huſbands all events:
Dull ſleep inſtructs, nor ſport vain dreams in vain.
Why then their loſs deplore that are not loſt?
Why wanders wretched Thought their tombs around
In infidel diſtreſs? Are angels there?
Slumbers, rak'd up in duſt, ethereal fire?
They live! they greatly live a life on earth
Unkindled, unconceiv'd, and from an eye
Of tenderneſs let heav'nly pity fall
On me, more juſtly number'd with the dead.
This is the deſert, this the ſolitude:
How populous, how vital is the grave!
This is Creation's melancholy vault,

The vale funereal, the ſad cypreſs gloom;
The land of apparitions, empty ſhades!
All, all on earth is ſhadow, all beyond
Is ſubſtance; the reverſe is Folly's creed.
How ſolid all, where change ſhall be no more?
 This is the bud of being, the dim dawn,
The twilight of our day, the veſtibule.
Life's theatre as yet is ſhut, and Death,
Strong Death, alone can heave the maſſy bar,
This groſs impediment of clay remove,
And make us, embryos of exiſtence, free.
From real life but little more remote
Is he, not yet a candidate for light,
The future embryo, ſlumb'ring in his ſire.
Embryos we muſt be till we burſt the ſhell,
Yon' ambient azure ſhell, and ſpring to life,
The life of gods, O tranſport! and of man.
 Yet man, fool man! here buries all his thoughts,
Inters celeſtial hopes without one ſigh.
Pris'ner of earth, and pent beneath the moon,
Here pinions all his wiſhes; wing'd by Heav'n
To fly at infinite, and reach it there,
Where ſeraphs gather immortality,
On Life's fair tree, faſt by the throne of God,
What golden joys ambroſial cluſt'ring glow
In his full beam, and ripen for the juſt,
Where momentary ages are no more!
Where Time, and Pain, and Chance, and Death expire!

And is it in the flight of threeſcore years
To puſh eternity from human thought,
And ſmother ſouls immortal in the duſt?
A ſoul immortal, ſpending all her fires,
Waſting her ſtrength in ſtrenuous idleneſs,
Thrown into tumult, raptur'd, or alarm'd,
At aught this ſcene can threaten or indulge,
Reſembles ocean into tempeſt wrought,
To waft a feather, or to drown a fly.
Where falls this cenſure? It o'erwhelms myſelf.
How was my heart incruſted by the world!
O how ſelf-fetter'd was my grov'ling ſoul!
How, like a worm, was I wrapt round and round
In ſilken thought, which reptile Fancy ſpun,
Till darken'd Reaſon lay quite clouded o'er,
With ſoft conceit of endleſs comfort here,
Nor yet put forth her wings to reach the ſkies!
Night-viſions may befriend (as ſung above:)
Our waking dreams are fatal. How I dream'd,
Of things impoſſible! (could ſleep do more?)
Of joys perpetual in perpetual change!
Of ſtable pleaſures on the toſſing wave!
Eternal ſunſhine in the ſtorms of life!
How richly were my noon-tide trances hung
With gorgeous tapeſtries of pictur'd joys!
Joy behind joy, in endleſs perſpective!
Till at Death's toll, whoſe reſtleſs iron tongue
Calls daily for his millions at a meal,

Starting I woke, and found myſelf undone.
Where now my frenzy's pompous furniture?
The cobwebb'd cottage, with its ragged wall
Of mould'ring mud, is royalty to me!
The ſpider's moſt-attenuated thread
Is cord, is cable, to man's tender tie
On earthly bliſs: it breaks at every breeze.
  O ye bleſt ſcenes of permanent delight!
Full above meaſure! laſting beyond bound!
A perpetuity of bliſs is bliſs.
Could you, ſo rich in rapture, fear an end,
That ghaſtly thought would drink up all your joy,
And quite unparadiſe the realms of light.
Safe are you lodg'd above theſe rolling ſpheres,
The baleful influence of whoſe giddy dance
Sheds ſad viciſſitude on all beneath.
Here teems with revolutions every hour,
And rarely for the better; or the beſt
More mortal than the common births of Fate.
Each moment has its ſickle, emulous
Of Time's enormous ſcythe, whoſe ample ſweep
Strikes empires from the root: each moment plays
His little weapon in the narrower ſphere
Of ſweet domeſtic comfort, and cuts down
The faireſt bloom of ſublunary bliſs.
  Bliſs! ſublunary bliſs!—proud words, and vain!
Implicit treaſon to divine decree!
A bold invaſion of the rights of Heav'n!

I clasp'd the phantoms, and I fond them air.
O had I weigh'd it ere my fond embrace,
What darts of agony had miss'd my heart!
Death! great proprietor of all! 'tis thine
To tread out empire, and to quench the stars.
The sun himself by thy permission shines,
And, one day, thou shalt pluck him from his sphere:
Amid such mighty plunder, why exhaust
Thy partial quiver on a mark so mean?
Why thy peculiar rancour wreak'd on me?
Insatiate Archer! could not one suffice?
Thy shaft flew thrice, and thrice my peace was slain;
And thrice, ere thrice yon' moon had fill'd her horn.
O Cynthia! why so pale? dost thou lament
Thy wretched neighbour? grieve to see thy wheel
Of ceaseless change outwhirl'd in human life?
How wanes my borrow'd bliss! from Fortune's smile,
Precarious courtesy! not virtue's sure,
Self-given, solar, ray of sound delight.
In ev'ry vary'd posture, place, and hour,
How widow'd ev'ry thought of ev'ry joy!
Thought, busy thought! too busy for my peace!
Thro' the dark postern of time long elaps'd,
Led softly, by the stillness of the night,
Led, like a murderer, (and such it proves!)
Strays (wretched rover!) o'er the pleasing past;
In quest of wretchedness perversely strays,
And finds all desert now; and meets the ghosts

Of my departed joys, a num'rous train!
I rue the riches of my former fate;
Sweet comfort's blaſted cluſters I lament;
I tremble at the bleſſings once ſo dear,
And ev'ry pleaſure pains me to the heart.
   Yet why complain? or why complain for one?
Hangs out the ſun his luſtre but for me,
The ſingle man? are angels all beſide?
I mourn for millions; 'tis the common lot:
In this ſhape or in that has Fate entail'd
The mother's throes on all of woman born,
Not more the children than ſure heirs of pain.
   War, famine, peſt, volcano, ſtorm, and fire,
Inteſtine broils, Oppreſſion, with her heart
Wrapt up in triple braſs, beſiege mankind.
God's image, diſinherited of day,
Here plung'd in mines, forgets a ſun was made:
There beings, deathleſs as their haughty lord,
Are hammer'd to the galling oar for life,
And plow the winter's wave, and reap deſpair.
Some for hard maſters, broken under arms,
In battle lopt away, with half their limbs,
Beg bitter bread thro' realms their valour ſav'd,
If ſo the tyrant or his minion doom.
Want, and incurable diſeaſe, (fell pair!)
On hopeleſs multitudes remorſeleſs ſeize
At once, and make a refuge of the grave.
How groaning hoſpitals eject their dead!

What numbers groan for ſad admiſſion there!
What numbers, once in Fortune's lap high-fed,
Solicit the cold hand of Charity!
To ſhock us more, ſolicit it in vain!
Ye ſilken ſons of Pleaſure! ſince in pains
You rue more modiſh viſits, viſit here,
And breathe from your debauch: give, and reduce
Surfeit's dominion o'er you. But ſo great
Your impudence, you bluſh at what is right.
  Happy! did ſorrow ſeize on ſuch alone.
Not prudence can defend, or virtue ſave.
Diſeaſe invades the chaſteſt temperance,
And puniſhment the guiltleſs; and alarm,
Thro' thickeſt ſhades, purſues the fond of peace.
Man's caution often into danger turns,
And, his guard falling, cruſhes him to death.
Not Happineſs itſelf makes good her name;
Our very wiſhes give us not our wiſh.
How diſtant oft' the thing we dote on moſt
From that for which we dote, felicity?
The ſmootheſt courſe of Nature has its pains,
And trueſt friends, thro' error, wound our reſt.
Without misfortune what calamities!
And what hoſtilities without a foe!
Nor are foes wanting to the beſt on earth.
But endleſs is the liſt of human ills,
And ſighs might ſooner fail than cauſe to ſigh.
  A part how ſmall of the terraqueous globe

Is tenanted by man? the reſt a waſte,
Rocks, deſerts, frozen ſeas, and burning ſands!
Wild haunts of monſters, poiſons, ſtings, and death.
Such is earth's melancholy map! but, far
More ſad! this earth is a true map of man:
So bounded are its haughty lord's delights
To woe's wide empire, where deep troubles toſs,
Loud ſorrows howl, envenom'd paſſions bite,
Rav'nous calamities our vitals ſeize,
And threat'ning Fate wide opens to devour.
  What then am I, who ſorrow for myſelf?
In age, in infancy, from others' aid
Is all our hope; to teach us to be kind:
That Nature's firſt, laſt, leſſon to mankind.
The ſelfiſh heart deſerves the pain it feels.
More gen'rous ſorrow, while it ſinks exalts,
And conſcious virtue mitigates the pang.
Nor virtue more than prudence bids me give
Swoln thought a ſecond channel: who divide,
They weaken, too, the torrent of their grief.
Take, then, O World! thy much-indebted tear.
How ſad a ſight is human happineſs
To thoſe whoſe thought can pierce beyond an hour!
O thou! whate'er thou art, whoſe heart exults,
Wouldſt thou I ſhould congratulate thy fate!
I know thou wouldſt; thy pride demands it from me:
Let thy pride pardon what thy nature needs,
The ſalutary cenſure of a friend.

Thou happy wretch! by blindneſs thou art bleſt;
By dotage dandled to perpetual ſmiles.
Know, Smiler! at thy peril art thou pleas'd;
Thy pleaſure is the promiſe of thy pain.
Misfortune, like a creditor ſevere,
But riſes in demand for her delay;
She makes a ſcourge of paſt proſperity,
To ſting thee more, and double thy diſtreſs.
  Lorenzo! Fortune makes her court to thee:
Thy fond heart dances while the Syren ſings.
Dear is thy welfare; think me not unkind;
I would not damp, but to ſecure thy joys.
Think not that fear is ſacred to the ſtorm.
Stand on thy guard againſt the ſmiles of Fate.
Is Heav'n tremendous in its frowns? moſt ſure;
And in its favours formidable too:
Its favours here are trials, not rewards;
A call to duty, not diſcharge from care,
And ſhould alarm us full as much as woes,
Awake us to their cauſe and conſequence,
And make us tremble, weigh'd with our deſert;
Awe Nature's tumult, and chaſtiſe her joys,
Leſt while we claſp we kill them; nay, invert
To worſe than ſimple miſery their charms.
Revolted joys, like foes in Civil war,
Like boſom friendſhips to reſentment ſour'd,
With rage envenom'd riſe againſt our peace.
Beware what earth calls happineſs; beware

All joys but joys that never can expire.
Who builds on leſs than an immortal baſe,
Fond as he ſeems, condemns his joys to death.
  Mine dy'd with thee, Philander! thy laſt ſigh
Diſſolv'd the charm; the diſinchanted earth
Loſt all her luſtre. Where her glittering towers?
Her golden mountains where? all darken'd down
To naked waſte; a dreary vale of tears.
The great magician's dead! Thou poor, pale piece
Of outcaſt earth, in darkneſs! what a change
From yeſterday! Thy darling hope ſo near,
(Long-labour'd prize!) O how ambition fluſh'd
Thy glowing cheek! ambition truly great,
Of virtuous praiſe. Death's ſubtle ſeed within,
(Sly, treach'rous miner!) working in the dark,
Smil'd at thy well-concerted ſcheme, and beckon'd
The worm to riot on that roſe ſo red,
Unfaded ere it fell, one moment's prey!
  Man's foreſight is conditionally wiſe.
Lorenzo! wiſdom into folly turns,
Oft' the firſt inſtant its idea fair
To labouring thought is born. How dim our eye!
The preſent moment terminates our ſight;
Clouds, thick as thoſe on Doomſday, drown the next:
We penetrate, we propheſy in vain.
Time is dealt out by particles, and each
Are mingled with the ſtreaming ſands of life.
By Fate's inviolable oath is ſworn

Deep ſilence, "where eternity begins."
By Nature's law, what may be may be now;
There's no prerogative in human hours.
In human hearts what bolder thought can riſe
Than man's preſumption on to-morrow's dawn?
Where is to-morrow? In another world.
For numbers this is certain; the reverſe
Is ſure to none; and yet on this *perhaps*,
This *peradventure*, infamous for lies,
As on a rock of adamant we build
Our mountain-hopes, ſpin out eternal ſchemes,
As we the Fatal Siſters could outſpin,
And, big with life's futurities, expire.
Not ev'n Philander had beſpoke his ſhroud;
Nor had he cauſe; a warning was deny'd.
How many fall as ſudden, not as ſafe?
As ſudden, tho' for years admoniſh'd home?
Of human ills the laſt extreme beware;
Beware, Lorenzo! a ſlow-ſudden death.
How dreadful that deliberate ſurpriſe!
Be wiſe to-day; 'tis madneſs to defer:
Next day the fatal precedent will plead;
Thus on, till wiſdom is puſh'd out of life.
Procraſtination is the thief of time;
Year after year it ſteals, till all are fled,
And to the mercies of a moment leaves
The vaſt concerns of an eternal ſcene.
If not ſo frequent, would not this be ſtrange?

That 'tis ſo frequent, this is ſtranger ſtill.
  Of man's miraculous miſtakes this bears
The palm, "That all men are about to live,"
For ever on the brink of being born.
All pay themſelves the compliment to think
They one day ſhall not drivel, and their pride
On this reverſion takes up ready praiſe;
At leaſt their own; their future ſelves applauds.
How excellent that life they ne'er will lead!
Time lodg'd in their own hands is Folly's vails;
That lodg'd in Fate's to wiſdom they conſign;
The thing they can't but purpoſe, they poſtpone.
'Tis not in folly not to ſcorn a fool,
And ſcarce in human wiſdom to do more.
All promiſe is poor dilatory man,
And that thro' ev'ry ſtage. When young, indeed,
In full content we ſometimes nobly reſt,
Unanxious for ourſelves, and only wiſh,
As duteous ſons, our fathers were more wiſe.
At thirty man ſuſpects himſelf a fool;
Knows it at forty, and reforms his plan;
At fifty chides his infamous delay,
Puſhes his prudent purpoſe to reſolve;
In all the magnanimity of thought
Reſolves, and re-reſolves; then dies the ſame.
  And why? becauſe he thinks himſelf immortal.
All men think all men mortal but themſelves;
Themſelves, when ſome alarming ſhock of Fate

Strikes thro' their wounded hearts the ſudden dread:
But their hearts wounded, like the wounded air,
Soon cloſe; where paſt the ſhaft no trace is found.
As from the wing no ſcar the ſky retains,
The parted wave no furrow from the keel,
So dies in human hearts the thought of death:
Ev'n with the tender tear which Nature ſheds
O'er thoſe we love, we drop it in their grave.
Can I forget Philander? that were ſtrange!
O my full heart!—But ſhould I give it vent,
The longeſt night, tho' longer far, would fail,
And the lark liſten to my midnight ſong.
The ſprightly lark's ſhrill matin wakes the morn.
Grief's ſharpeſt thorn hard preſſing on my breaſt,
I ſtrive, with wakeful melody, to cheer
The ſullen gloom, ſweet Philomel! like thee,
And call the ſtars to liſten: every ſtar
Is deaf to mine, enamour'd of thy lay.
Yet be not vain; there are who thine excel,
And charm thro' diſtant ages. Wrapt in ſhade,
Pris'ner of darkneſs! to the ſilent hours
How often I repeat their rage divine,
To lull my griefs, and ſteal my heart from woe!
I roll their raptures, but not catch their fire.
Dark, tho' not blind, like thee, Mæonides!
Or, Milton! thee; ah, could I reach your ſtrain!
Or his who made Mæonides our own.
Man, too, he ſung: immortal man I ſing:

Oft' burſts my ſong beyond the bounds of life:
What, now, but immortality can pleaſe?
O had he preſs'd his theme, purſu'd the track
Which opens out of darkneſs into day!
O had he mounted on his wing of fire,
Soar'd where I ſink, and ſung immortal man,
How had it bleſt mankind, and reſcu'd me!

End of Night First.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT II.

ON TIME, DEATH, FRIENDSHIP.

Humbly inſcribed to the

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF WILMINGTON.

“When the cock crew he wept,”—ſmote by that eye
Which looks on me, on all; that pow'r who bids
This midnight centinel, with clarion ſhrill,
Emblem of that which ſhall awake the dead,
Rouſe ſouls from ſlumber into thoughts of Heav'n.
Shall I too weep? where then is fortitude?
And fortitude abandon'd, where is man?
I know the terms on which he ſees the light:
He that is born is liſted: life is war;
Eternal war with woe: who bears it beſt
Deſerves it leaſt.—On other themes I'll dwell.
Lorenzo! let me turn my thoughts on thee
And thine; on themes may profit; profit there
Where moſt thy need. Themes, too, the genuine growth
Of dear Philander's duſt. He thus, tho' dead,
May ſtill befriend.—What themes? Time's wondrous price,
Death, friendſhip, and Philander's final ſcene.

So could I touch theſe themes as might obtain
Thine ear, nor leave thy heart quite diſengag'd,
The good deed would delight me; half-impreſs'd
On my dark cloud an iris, and from grief
Call glory.—Doſt thou mourn Philander's fate?
I know thou ſay'ſt it: ſays thy life the ſame?
He mourns the dead who lives as they deſire.
Where is that thirſt, that avarice of time,
(O glorious avarice!) thought of death inſpires,
As rumour'd robberies endear our gold?
O Time! than gold more ſacred; more a load
Than lead to fools, and fools reputed wiſe.
What moment granted man without account?
What years are ſquander'd, wiſdom's debt unpaid?
Our wealth in days all due to that diſcharge.
Haſte, haſte, he lies in wait, he's at the door;
Inſidious Death! ſhould his ſtrong hand arreſt,
No compoſition ſets the pris'ner free.
Eternity's inexorable chain
Faſt binds, and vengeance claims the full arrear.
How late I ſhudder'd on the brink! how late
Life call'd for her laſt refuge in deſpair!
That time is mine, O Mead! to thee I owe;
Fain would I pay thee with eternity,
But ill my genius anſwers my deſire:
My ſickly ſong is mortal, paſt thy cure.
Accept the will;—that dies not with my ſtrain.
For what calls thy diſeaſe, Lorenzo? not

For Esculapian, but for moral aid.'
Thou think'st it folly to be wise too soon.
Youth is not rich in time; it may be, poor;
Part with it as with money, sparing; pay
No moment, but in purchase of its worth;
And what its worth ask deathbeds; they can tell.
Part with it as with life, reluctant; big
With holy hope of nobler time to come;
Time higher aim'd, still nearer the great mark
Of men and angels, virtue more divine.
Is this our duty, wisdom, glory, gain?
(These Heav'n benign in vital union binds)
And sport we like the natives of the bough,
When vernal suns inspire? Amusement reigns
Man's great demand: to trifle is to live:
And is it then a trifle, too, to die?
Thou say'st I preach, Lorenzo! 'tis confest.
What if, for once, I preach thee quite awake?
Who wants amusement in the flame of battle?
Is it not treason to the soul immortal,
Her foes in arms, eternity the prize?
Will toys amuse when med'cines cannot cure?
When spirits ebb, when life's inchanting scenes
Their lustre lose, and lessen in our sight,
As lands, and cities with their glitt'ring spires,
To the poor shatter'd bark, by sudden storm
Thrown off to sea, and soon to perish there;
Will toys amuse? No; thrones will then be toys,

And earth and ſkies ſeem duſt upon the ſcale.
Redeem we time?—Its loſs we dearly buy.
What pleads Lorenzo for his high-priz'd ſports?
He pleads time's num'rous blanks; he loudly pleads
The ſtraw-like trifles on life's common ſtream.
From whom thoſe blanks and trifles but from thee?
No blank, no trifle, Nature made, or meant.
Virtue, or purpos'd virtue, ſtill be thine;
This cancels thy complaint at once; this leaves
In act no trifle, and no blank in time.
This greatens, fills, immortalizes all;
This the bleſt art of turning all to gold;
This the good heart's prerogative to raiſe
A royal tribute from the pooreſt hours;
Immenſe revenue! ev'ry moment pays.
If nothing more than purpoſe in thy pow'r,
Thy purpoſe firm is equal to the deed.
Who does the beſt his circumſtance allows
Does well, acts nobly; angels could no more.
Our outward act, indeed, admits reſtraint:
'Tis not in things o'er thought to domineer.
Guard well thy thought: our thoughts are heard in heav'n.
On all-important time, thro' ev'ry age,
Tho' much, and warm, the wiſe have urg'd, the man
Is yet unborn who duly weighs an hour.
"I've loſt a day,"—the prince who nobly cry'd,
Had been an emperor without his crown.
Of Rome? ſay, rather, lord of human race:

He ſpoke as if deputed by mankind.
So ſhould all ſpeak : ſo reaſon ſpeaks in all :
From the ſoft whiſpers of that God in man,
Why fly to folly, why to frenzy fly,
For reſcue from the bleſſings we poſſeſs?
Time, the ſupreme!—Time is eternity;
Pregnant with all eternity can give;
Pregnant with all that makes archangels ſmile.
Who murders Time, he cruſhes in the birth
A pow'r ethereal, only not ador'd.
  Ah! how unjuſt to Nature and himſelf
Is thoughtleſs, thankleſs, inconſiſtent man!
Like children babbling nonſenſe in their ſports,
We cenſure Nature for a ſpan too ſhort;
That ſpan too ſhort we tax as tedious too;
Torture invention, all expedients tire,
To laſh the ling'ring moments into ſpeed,
And whirl us (happy riddance!) from ourſelves.
Art, brainleſs Art! our furious charioteer,
(For Nature's voice unſtifled would recall)
Drives headlong tow'rds the precipice of death;
Death moſt our dread; death thus more dreadful made.
O what a riddle of abſurdity!
Leiſure is pain; takes off our chariot-wheels:
How heavily we drag the load of life!
Bleſt leiſure is our curſe; like that of Cain,
It makes us wander, wander earth around,
To fly that tyrant Thought. As Atlas groan'd

The world beneath, we groan beneath an hour:
We cry for mercy to the next amuſement;
The next amuſement mortgages our fields;
Slight inconvenience! priſons hardly frown,
From hateful time if priſons ſet us free.
Yet when Death kindly tenders us relief,
We call him cruel; years to moments ſhrink,
Ages to years. The teleſcope is turn'd:
To man's falſe optics (from his folly falſe)
Time, in advance, behind him hides his wings,
And ſeems to creep, decrepit with his age.
Behold him when paſt by; what then is ſeen
But his broad pinions ſwifter than the winds?
And all mankind, in contradiction ſtrong,
Rueful, aghaſt, cry out on his career.
  Leave to thy foes theſe errors and theſe ills;
To Nature juſt, their cauſe and cure explore.
Not ſhort Heaven's bounty, boundleſs our expenſe;
No niggard Nature, men are prodigals.
We waſte, not uſe our time; we breathe, not live.
Time waſted is exiſtence, us'd is life:
And bare exiſtence man, to live ordain'd,
Wrings and oppreſſes with enormous weight.
And why? ſince time was giv'n for uſe, not waſte,
Enjoin'd to fly, with tempeſt, tide, and ſtars,
To keep his ſpeed, nor ever wait for man.
Time's uſe was doom'd a pleaſure, waſte a pain,
That man might feel his error if unſeen,

And, feeling, fly to labour for his cure;
Not, blund'ring, ſplit on idleneſs for eaſe.
Life's cares are comforts; ſuch by Heav'n deſign'd;
He that has none muſt make them, or be wretched.
Cares are employments, and without employ
The ſoul is on a rack, the rack of reſt,
To ſouls moſt adverſe, action all their joy.
Here then the riddle, mark'd above, unfolds;
Then time turns torment, when man turns a fool.
We rave, we wreſtle with great Nature's plan;
We thwart the Deity; and 'tis decreed,
Who thwart his will ſhall contradict their own.
Hence our unnatural quarrel with ourſelves;
Our thoughts at enmity; our boſom-broil:
We puſh Time from us, and we wiſh him back;
Laviſh of luſtrums, and yet fond of life:
Life we think long and ſhort; death ſeek and ſhun:
Body and ſoul, like peeviſh man and wife,
United jar, and yet are loath to part.
Oh the dark days of vanity! while here
How taſteleſs! and how terrible when gone!
Gone? they ne'er go; when paſt they haunt us ſtill:
The ſpirit walks of ev'ry day deceas'd,
And ſmiles an angel, or a fury frowns.
Nor death nor life delight us. If time paſt
And time poſſeſt both pain us, what can pleaſe?
That which the Deity to pleaſe ordain'd,
Time us'd. The man who conſecrates his hours

By vig'rous effort and an honeſt aim,
At once he draws the ſting of life and death;
He walks with Nature, and her paths are peace.
Our error's cauſe and cure are ſeen: ſee next
Time's nature, origin, importance, ſpeed,
And thy great gain from urging his career.—
All-ſenſual man, becauſe untouch'd, unſeen,
He looks on time as nothing. Nothing elſe
Is truly man's; 'tis Fortune's.—Time's a god.
Haſt thou ne'er heard of Time's omnipotence?
For, or againſt, what wonders can he do!
And will: to ſtand blank neuter he diſdains.
Not on thoſe terms was Time (Heav'n's ſtranger!) ſent
On his important embaſſy to man.
Lorenzo! no: on the long-deſtin'd hour,
From everlaſting ages growing ripe,
That memorable hour of wondrous birth,
When the Dread Sire, on emanation bent,
And big with Nature, riſing in his might,
Call'd forth creation (for then Time was born)
By Godhead ſtreaming thro' a thouſand worlds;
Not on thoſe terms, from the great days of heav'n,
From old Eternity's myſterious orb
Was Time cut off, and caſt beneath the ſkies;
The ſkies, which watch him in his new abode,
Meaſuring his motions by revolving ſpheres,
That horologe machinery divine.
Hours, days, and months, and years, his children, play

Like num'rous wings, around him, as he flies;
Or rather, as unequal plumes, they ſhape
His ample pinions, ſwift at darted flame,
To gain his goal, to reach his ancient reſt,
And join anew Eternity his ſire,
In his immutability to neſt,
When worlds, that count his circles now, unhing'd,
(Fate the loud ſignal ſounding) headlong ruſh
To timeleſs night and chaos, whence they roſe.
Why ſpur the ſpeedy? why with levities
New-wing thy ſhort ſhort day's too rapid flight?
Know'ſt thou or what thou doſt, or what is done?
Man flies from time, and time from man: too ſoon,
In ſad divorce, this double flight muſt end;
And then where are we? where, Lorenzo! then,
Thy ſports, thy pomps? I grant thee in a ſtate
Not unambitious; in the ruffled ſhroud,
Thy Parian tomb's triumphant arch beneath.
Has Death his fopperies? then well may Life
Put on her plume, and in her rainbow ſhine.
Ye well-array'd! ye Lilies of our land!
Ye Lilies Male! who neither toil nor ſpin,
(As ſiſter lilies might) if not ſo wiſe
As Solomon, more ſumptuous to the ſight!
Ye Delicate! who nothing can ſupport,
Yourſelves moſt inſupportable! for whom
The winter roſe muſt blow, the ſun put on
A brighter beam in Leo; ſilky-ſoft

Favonius! breathe ſtill ſofter, or be chid;
And other worlds ſend odours, ſauce, and ſong,
And robes, and notions, fram'd in foreign looms!
O ye Lorenzos of our age! who deem
One moment unamus'd a miſery
Not made for feeble man! who call aloud
For ev'ry bawble drivell'd o'er by ſenſe;
For rattles and conceits of ev'ry caſt;
For change of follies and relays of joy,
To drag your patient thro' the tedious length
Of a ſhort winter's day——ſay, Sages! ſay,
Wit's Oracles! ſay, Dreamers of gay dreams!
How will you weather an eternal night,
Where ſuch expedients fail?
O treach'rous Conſcience! while ſhe ſeems to ſleep
On roſe and myrtle, lull'd with Syren ſong;
While ſhe ſeems, nodding o'er her charge, to drop
On headlong Appetite the ſlacken'd rein,
And give us up to licenſe, unrecall'd,
Unmark'd;—ſee, from behind her ſecret ſtand,
The ſly informer minutes ev'ry fault,
And her dread diary with horror fills.
Not the groſs act alone employs her pen;
She reconnoitres Fancy's airy band.
A watchful foe! the formidable ſpy
Liſt'ning, o'erhears the whiſpers of our camp,
Our dawning purpoſes of heart explores,
And ſteals our embryos of iniquity.

As all-rapacious uſurers conceal
Their Doomſday-book from all-conſuming heirs,
Thus, with indulgence moſt ſevere, ſhe treats
Us ſpendthrifts of ineſtimable time,
Unnoted notes each moment miſapply'd;
In leaves more durable than leaves of braſs
Writes our whole hiſtory, which Death ſhall read
In ev'ry pale delinquent's private ear,
And judgment publiſh; publiſh to more worlds
Than this, and endleſs age in groans reſound.
Lorenzo! ſuch that ſleeper in thy breaſt;
Such is her ſlumber, and her vengeance ſuch
For ſlighted counſel; ſuch thy future peace;
And think'ſt thou ſtill thou canſt be wiſe too ſoon?
  But why on time ſo laviſh is my ſong?
On this great theme kind Nature keeps a ſchool
To teach her ſons herſelf. Each night we die;
Each morn are born anew: each day a life!
And ſhall we kill each day? If trifling kills,
Sure vice muſt butcher. O what heaps of ſlain
Cry out for vengeance on us! Time deſtroy'd
Is ſuicide, where more than blood is ſpilt.
Time flies, death urges, knells call, Heav'n invites,
Hell threatens: all exerts; in effort all,
More than creation, labours! Labours more?
And is there in creation what, amidſt
This tumult univerſal, wing'd diſpatch,
And ardent energy, ſupinely yawns?——

Man ſleeps, and man alone; and man, whoſe fate,
Fate irreverſible, entire, extreme,
Endleſs, hair-hung, breeze-ſhaken, o'er the gulf
A moment trembles; drops! and man, for whom
All elſe is an alarm; man, the ſole cauſe
Of this ſurrounding ſtorm! and yet he ſleeps,
As the ſtorm rock'd to reſt.—Throw years away?
Throw empires, and be blameleſs. Moments ſeize,
Heav'n's on their wing: a moment we may wiſh,
When worlds want wealth to buy. Bid Day ſtand ſtill,
Bid him drive back his car, and reimport
The period paſt, regive the given hour.
Lorenzo! more than miracles we want.
Lorenzo—O for yeſterdays to come!
  Such is the language of the man awake,
His ardour ſuch for what oppreſſes thee.
And is his ardour vain, Lorenzo? No;
That more than miracle the gods indulge.
To-day is yeſterday return'd; return'd
Full-pow'r'd to cancel, expiate, raiſe, adorn,
And reinſtate us on the rock of peace.
Let it not ſhare its predeceſſor's fate,
Nor, like its elder ſiſters, die a fool.
Shall it evaporate in fume, fly off
Fuliginous, and ſtain us deeper ſtill?
Shall we be poorer for the plenty pour'd?
More wretched for the clemencies of Heav'n?
  Where ſhall I find him? Angels! tell me where:
You know him: he is near you; point him out.

Shall I ſee glories beaming from his brow,
Or trace his footſteps by the riſing flowers?
Your golden wings, now hov'ring o'er him, ſhed
Protection; now are waving in applauſe
To that bleſt ſon of foreſight! lord of fate!
That awful independent on to-morrow!
Whoſe work is done; who triumphs in the paſt;
Whoſe yeſterdays look backwards with a ſmile,
Nor, like the Parthian, wound him as they fly;
That common but opprobrious lot! Paſt hours,
If not by guilt, yet wound us by their flight,
If folly bounds our proſpect by the grave,
All feeling of futurity benumb'd;
All godlike paſſion for eternals quench'd;
All reliſh of realities expir'd;
Renounc'd all correſpondence with the ſkies;
Our freedom chain'd; quite wingleſs our deſire;
In ſenſe dark-priſon'd all that ought to ſoar;
Prone to the centre; crawling in the duſt;
Diſmounted ev'ry great and glorious aim;
Imbruted ev'ry faculty divine;
Heart-bury'd in the rubbiſh of the world,
The world, that gulf of ſouls, immortal ſouls,
Souls elevate, angelic, wing'd with fire
To reach the diſtant ſkies, and triumph there
On thrones, which ſhall not mourn their maſters
Tho' we from earth, ethereal they that fell. [chang'd;
Such veneration due, O man, to man!

Who venerate themſelves the world deſpiſe.
For what, gay Friend! is this eſcutcheon'd world,
Which hangs out death in one eternal night?
A night that glooms us in the noon-tide ray,
And wraps our thought at banquets in the ſhroud.
Life's little ſtage is a ſmall eminence,
Inch high the grave above, that home of man,
Where dwells the multitude: we gaze around;
We read their monuments; we ſigh; and while
We ſigh we ſink; and are what we deplor'd:
Lamenting or lamented all our lot!
Is Death at diſtance? No; he has been on thee,
And giv'n ſure earneſt of his final blow.
Thoſe hours which lately ſmil'd, where are they now?
Pallid to thought, and ghaſtly! drown'd, all drown'd
In that great deep which nothing diſembogues!
And, dying, they bequeath'd thee ſmall renown.
The reſt are on the wing: how fleet their flight!
Already has the fatal train took fire;
A moment, and the world's blown up to thee;
The ſun is darkneſs, and the ſtars are duſt.
'Tis greatly wiſe to talk with our paſt Hours,
And aſk them what report they bore to Heav'n,
And how they might have borne more welcome news.
Their anſwers form what men Experience call;
If Wiſdom's friend her beſt, if not, worſt foe.
O reconcile them! kind Experience cries,
"There's nothing here but what as nothing weighs;

"The more our joy, the more we know it vain,
"And by fuccefs are tutor'd to defpair."
Nor is it only thus, but muft be fo.
Who knows not this, tho' gray, is ftill a child.
Loofe then from earth the grafp of fond defire,
Weigh anchor, and fome happier clime explore.
Art thou fo moor'd thou can'ft not difengage,
Nor give thy thoughts a ply to future fcenes?
Since by life's paffing breath, blown up from earth,
Light as the fummer's duft, we take in air
A moment's giddy flight, and fall again,
Join the dull mafs, increafe the trodden foil,
And fleep, till Earth herfelf fhall be no more;
Since then (as emmets, their fmall world o'erthrown)
We, fore-amaz'd, from out earth's ruins crawl,
And rife to fate extreme of foul or fair,
As man's own choice (controller of the fkies!)
As man's defpotic will, perhaps one hour,
(O how omnipotent is time!) decrees,
Should not each warning give a ftrong alarm?
Warning, far lefs than that of bofom torn
From bofom, bleeding o'er the facred dead!
Should not each dial ftrike us as we pafs,
Portentous, as the written wall which ftruck,
O'er midnight bowls, the proud Affyrian pale,
Ere-while high-flufh'd with infolence and wine?
Like that, the dial fpeaks, and points to thee,
Lorenzo! loath to break thy banquet up:

" O Man! thy kingdom is departing from thee,
" And while it lafts is emptier than my fhade."
Its filent language fuch; nor need'ft thou call
Thy Magi to decipher what it means.
Know, like the Median, Fate is in thy walls:
Doft afk how? whence? Belfhazzar-like, amaz'd.
Man's make inclofes the fure feeds of death;
Life feeds the murderer: ingrate! he thrives
On her own meal, and then his nurfe devours.
But here, Lorenzo, the delufion lies;
That folar fhadow, as it meafures life,
It life refembles too. Life fpeeds away
From point to point, tho' feeming to ftand ftill.
The cunning fugitive is fwift by ftealth:
Too fubtle is the movement to be feen;
Yet foon man's hour is up, and we are gone.
Warnings point out our danger, gnomons time:
As thefe are ufelefs when the fun is fet,
So thofe, but when more glorious Reafon fhines.
Reafon fhould judge in all; in Reafon's eye
That fedentary fhadow travels hard:
But fuch our gravitation to the wrong,
So prone our hearts to whifper what we wifh,
'Tis later with the wife than he's aware.
A Wilmington goes flower than the fun;
And all mankind miftake their time of day;
Ev'n age itfelf. Frefh hopes are hourly fown
In furrow'd brows. So gentle life's defcent,

We ſhut our eyes, and think it is a plain.
We take fair days in winter for the ſpring,
And turn our bleſſings into bane. Since oft'
Man muſt compute that age he cannnot feel,
He ſcarce believes he's older for his years.
Thus at life's lateſt eve we keep in ſtore
One diſappointment, ſure to crown the reſt,
The diſappointment of a promis'd hour.
On this or ſimilar, Philander! thou
Whoſe mind was moral as the preacher's tongue,
And ſtrong to wield all ſcience worth the name,
How often we talk'd down the ſummer's ſun,
And cool'd our paſſions by the breezy ſtream!
How often thaw'd and ſhorten'd winter's eve
By conflict kind, that ſtruck out latent truth,
Beſt found ſo ſought, to the recluſe more coy!
Thoughts diſintangle paſſing o'er the lip;
Clean runs the thread; if not, 'tis thrown away,
Or kept to tie up nonſenſe for a ſong;
Song faſhionably fruitleſs, ſuch as ſtains
The fancy, and unhallow'd paſſion fires,
Chiming her ſaints to Cytherea's fane.
Know'ſt thou, Lorenzo! what a friend contains?
As bees mix'd nectar draw from fragrant flow'rs,
So men from Friendſhip wiſdom and delight;
Twins ty'd by Nature, if they part they die.
Haſt thou no friend to ſet thy mind abroach?
Good ſenſe will ſtagnate. Thoughts ſhut up want air,

And ſpoil, like bales unopen'd to the ſun.
Had thought been all, ſweet ſpeech had been deny'd;
Speech! thought's canal; ſpeech! thought's criterion
too:
Thought in the mine may come forth gold or droſs;
When coin'd in word, we know its real worth:
If ſterling, ſtore it for thy future uſe;
'Twill buy thee benefit, perhaps renown.
Thought, too, deliver'd, is the more poſſeſs'd;
Teaching we learn, and giving we retain
The births of intellect, when dumb forgot.
Speech ventilates our intellectual fire;
Speech burniſhes our mental magazine;
Brightens for ornament, and whets for uſe.
What numbers, ſheath'd in erudition, lie
Plung'd to the hilts in venerable tomes,
And ruſted in, who might have borne an edge,
And play'd a ſprightly beam, if born to ſpeech,
If born bleſt heirs of half their mother's tongue!
'Tis thought's exchange, which, like th' alternate puſh
Of waves conflicting, breaks the learned ſcum,
And defecates the ſtudent's ſtanding pool.
In contemplation is his proud reſource?
'Tis poor as proud, by converſe unſuſtain'd.
Rude thought runs wild in Contemplation's field;
Converſe, the menage, breaks it to the bit
Of due reſtraint; and Emulation's ſpur
Gives graceful energy, by rivals aw'd.

'Tis converse qualifies for solitude,
As exercise for salutary rest:
By that untutor'd, Contemplation raves,
And Nature's fool by Wisdom's is outdone.
Wisdom, tho' richer than Peruvian mines,
And sweeter than the sweet ambrosial hive,
What is she but the means of happiness?
That unobtain'd, than Folly more a fool;
A melancholy fool, without her bells.
Friendship, the means of wisdom, richly gives
The precious end, which makes our wisdom wise.
Nature, in zeal for human amity,
Denies or damps an undivided joy.
Joy is an import; joy is an exchange;
Joy flies monopolists: it calls for two:
Rich fruit! heav'n-planted! never pluck'd by one.
Needful auxiliars are our friends, to give
To social man true relish of himself.
Full on ourselves descending in a line,
Pleasure's bright beam is feeble in delight:
Delight intense is taken by rebound;
Reverberated pleasures fire the breast.
Celestial Happiness! whene'er she stoops
To visit earth, one shrine the goddess finds,
And one alone, to make her sweet amends
For absent heav'n—the bosom of a friend;
Where heart meets heart, reciprocally soft,
Each other's pillow to repose divine.

Beware the counterfeit; in paſſion's flame
Hearts melt, but melt like ice, ſoon harder froze.
True love ſtrikes root in reaſon, paſſion's foe:
Virtue alone entenders us for life:
I wrong her much—entenders us for ever.
Of friendſhip's faireſt fruits, the fruit moſt fair
Is virtue kindling at a rival fire,
And emulouſly rapid in her race.
O the ſoft enmity! endearing ſtrife!
This carries Friendſhip to her noon-tide point,
And gives the rivet of eternity.
From friendſhip, which outlives my former themes,
Glorious ſurvivor of old Time and Death!
From friendſhip, thus, that flow'r of heav'nly ſeed,
The wiſe extract earth's moſt Hyblean bliſs,
Superior wiſdom, crown'd with ſmiling joy.
But for whom bloſſoms this Elyſian flower?
Abroad they find who cheriſh it at home.
Lorenzo! pardon what my love extorts,
An honeſt love, and not afraid to frown.
Tho' choice of follies faſten on the great,
None clings more obſtinate than fancy fond
That ſacred friendſhip is their eaſy prey,
Caught by the wafture of a golden lure,
Or faſcination of a high-born ſmile.
Their ſmiles the great, and the coquette, throw out
For others' hearts, tenacious of their own;
And we no leſs of ours, when ſuch the bait.

Ye Fortune's Cofferers! ye Pow'rs of Wealth!
Can gold gain friendſhip? impudence of hope!
As well mere man an angel might beget.
Love, and love only, is the loan for love.
Lorenzo! pride repreſs, nor hope to find
A friend, but what has found a friend in thee.
All like the purchaſe, few the price will pay,
And this makes friends ſuch miracles below.
  What if (ſince daring on ſo nice a theme)
I ſhew thee friendſhip delicate as dear,
Of tender violations apt to die?
Reſerve will wound it, and diſtruſt deſtroy.
Deliberate on all things with thy friend:
But ſince friends grow not thick on ev'ry bough,
Nor ev'ry friend unrotten at the core,
Firſt on thy friend delib'rate with thyſelf;
Pauſe, ponder, ſift; not eager in the choice,
Nor jealous of the choſen: fixing fix;
Judge before friendſhip, then confide till death.
Well for thy friend, but nobler far for thee.
How gallant danger for earth's higheſt prize!
A friend is worth all hazards we can run.
"Poor is the friendleſs maſter of a world.
"A world in purchaſe for a friend is gain."
  So ſung he (angels hear that angel ſing!
Angels from friendſhip gather half their joy)
So ſung Philander, as his friend went round
In the rich ichor, in the gen'rous blood

Of Bacchus, purple god of joyous wit,
A brow ſolute, and ever-laughing eye.
He drank long health and virtue to his friend,
His friend! who warm'd him more, who more inſpir'd.
Friendſhip's the wine of life; but friendſhip new
(Not ſuch was his) is neither ſtrong nor pure.
O! for the bright complexion, cordial warmth,
And elevating ſpirit of a friend,
For twenty ſummers ripening by my ſide,
All feculence of falſehood long thrown down,
All ſocial virtues riſing in his ſoul,
As cryſtal clear, and ſmiling as they riſe!
Here nectar flows; it ſparkles in our ſight;
Rich to the taſte, and genuine from the heart.
High-flavour'd bliſs for gods! on earth how rare!
On earth how loſt!—Philander is no more.
  Think'ſt thou the theme intoxicates my ſong?
Am I too warm?—Too warm I cannot be.
I lov'd him much, but now I love him more.
Like birds, whoſe beauties languiſh, half-conceal'd,
Till, mounted on the wing, their gloſſy plumes
Expanded, ſhine with azure, green, and gold;
How bleſſings brighten as they take their flight!
His flight Philander took, his upward flight,
If ever ſoul aſcended. Had he dropp'd,
(That eagle genius!) O had he let fall
One feather as he flew, I then had wrote
What friends might flatter, prudent foes forbear,

Rivals ſcarce damn, and Zoilus reprieve.
Yet what I can I muſt: it were profane
To quench a glory lighted at the ſkies,
And caſt in ſhadows his illuſtrious cloſe.
Strange! the theme moſt affecting, moſt ſublime,
Momentous moſt to man, ſhould ſleep unſung!
And yet it ſleeps, by genius unawak'd
Painim or Chriſtian, to the bluſh of Wit.
Man's higheſt triumph, man's profoundeſt fall,
The deathbed of the juſt! is yet undrawn
By mortal hand; it merits a divine:
Angels ſhould paint it, angels ever there,
There on a poſt of honour and of joy.
Dare I preſume, then? but Philander bids,
And glory tempts, and inclination calls.
Yet am I ſtruck, as ſtruck the ſoul beneath
Aërial groves' impenetrable gloom,
Or in ſome mighty ruin's ſolemn ſhade,
Or gazing, by pale lamps, on high-born duſt
In vaults, thin courts of poor unflatter'd kings,
Or at the midnight altar's hallow'd flame.
It is religion to proceed: I pauſe——
And enter, aw'd the temple of my theme.
Is it his deathbed? No; it is his ſhrine:
Behold him there juſt riſing to a god.
The chamber where the good man meets his fate
Is privileg'd beyond the common walk
Of virtuous life, quite in the verge of heav'n.

Fly, ye Profane! if not, draw near with awe,
Receive the bleſſing, and adore the chance
That threw in this Betheſda your diſeaſe:
If unreſtor'd by this deſpair your cure;
For here reſiſtleſs Demonſtration dwells.
A deathbed 's a detector of the heart.
Here tir'd Diſſimulation drops her maſk
Thro' Life's grimace, that miſtreſs of the ſcene!
Here real and apparent are the ſame.
You ſee the man, you ſee his hold on heav'n,
If ſound his virtue, as Philander's ſound.
Heav'n waits not the laſt moment; owns her friends
On this ſide death, and points them out to men;
A lecture ſilent, but of ſov'reign pow'r!
To Vice confuſion, and to Virtue peace.
  Whatever farce the boaſtful hero plays,
Virtue alone has majeſty in death,
And greater ſtill, the more the tyrant frowns.
Philander! he ſeverely frown'd on thee.
"No warning giv'n! unceremonious fate!
"A ſudden ruſh from life's meridian joys!
"A wrench from all we love! from all we are!
"A reſtleſs bed of pain! a plunge opaque
"Beyond conjecture! feeble Nature's dread!
"Strong Reaſon's ſhudders at the dark unknown!
"A ſun extinguiſh'd! a juſt opening grave!
"And, oh! the laſt, laſt; what? (can words expreſs,
"Thought reach it?) the laſt—ſilence of a friend!"

Where are thoſe horrors, that amazement, where
This hideous group of ills which ſingly ſhock,
Demand from man.—I thought him man till now.
 Thro' Nature's wreck, thro' vanquiſh'd agonies,
(Like the ſtars ſtruggling thro' this midnight gloom)
What gleams of joy? what more than human peace?
Where the frail mortal, the poor abject worm?
No, not in death the mortal to be found.
His conduct is a legacy for all,
Richer than Mammon's for his ſingle heir.
His comforters he comforts; great in ruin,
With unreluctant grandeur gives, not yields,
His ſoul ſublime, and cloſes with his fate.
 How our hearts burnt within us at the ſcene!
Whence this brave bound o'er limits fix'd to man?
His God ſuſtains him in his final hour,
His final hour brings glory to his God!
Man's glory Heav'n vouchſafes to call her own.
We gaze, we weep; mix'd tears of grief and joy!
Amazement ſtrikes! devotion burſts to flame!
Chriſtians adore! and Infidels believe.
 As ſome tall tow'r, or lofty mountain's brow,
Detains the ſun, illuſtrious, from its height,
While riſing vapours and deſcending ſhades,
With damps and darkneſs drown the ſpacious vale,
Undampt by doubt, undarken'd by deſpair,
Philander thus auguſtly rears his head,
At that black hour which gen'ral horror ſheds

On the low level of th' inglorious throng:
Sweet peace, and heav'nly hope, and humble joy,
Divinely beam on his exalted ſoul;
Deſtruction gild and crown him for the ſkies
With incommunicable luſtre bright.

End of Night Second.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT III.

NARCISSA.

Humbly inscribed

TO HER GRACE THE DUCHESS OF F———.

Ignoscenda quidem, scirent si ignoscere manes. — Virg.

From dreams, where thought in Fancy's maze runs mad,
To reason, that heav'n-lighted lamp in man,
Once more I wake; and at the destin'd hour,
Punctual as lovers to the moment sworn,
I keep my assignation with my woe.
O! lost to virtue, lost to manly thought,
Lost to the noble sallies of the soul!
Who think it solitude to be alone.
Communion sweet! communion large and high!
Our reason, guardian angel, and our God!
Then nearest these, when others most remote;
And all, ere long, shall be remote but these:
How dreadful, then, to meet them all alone,
A stranger! unacknowledg'd! unapprov'd!
Now woo them, wed them, bind them to thy breast;
To win thy wish creation has no more:

Or if we wish a fourth, it is a friend.——
But friends how mortal! dang'rous the desire.
 Take Phœbus to yourselves, ye basking Bards!
Inebriate at fair Fortune's fountain-head,
And reeling thro' the wilderness of joy,
Where Sense runs savage, broke from Reason' schain,
And sings false peace, till smother'd by the pall.
My fortune is unlike, unlike my song,
Unlike the deity my song invokes.
I to Day's soft-ey'd sister pay my court,
(Endymion's rival) and her aid implore,
Now first implor'd in succour to the Muse.
 Thou who didst lately borrow Cynthia's * form,
And modestly forego thine own! O thou
Who didst thyself, at midnight hours, inspire!
Say, why not Cynthia, patroness of song?
As thou her crescent, she thy character
Assumes, still more a goddess by the change.
 Are there demurring wits who dare dispute
This revolution in the world inspir'd?
Ye train Pierian! to the lunar sphere,
In silent hour, address your ardent call
For aid immortal, less her brother's right.
She with the spheres harmonious nightly leads
The mazy dance, and hears their matchless strain,
A strain for gods, deny'd to mortal ear.
Transmit it heard, thou Silver Queen of heav'n!

* At the Duke of Norfolk's masquerade.

What title or what name endears thee moſt?
Cynthia! Cyllene! Phœbe!—or doſt hear
With higher guſt, fair P——d of the ſkies?
Is that the ſoft inchantment calls thee down,
More pow'rful than of old Circean charm?
Come, but from heav'nly banquets with thee bring
The ſoul of ſong, and whiſper in mine ear
The theft divine; or in propitious dreams
(For dreams are thine) transfuſe it thro' the breaſt
Of thy firſt votary—but not thy laſt,
If, like thy nameſake, thou art ever kind.
And kind thou wilt be, kind on ſuch a theme;
A theme ſo like thee, a quite lunar theme,
Soft, modeſt, melancholy, female, fair!
A theme that roſe all pale, and told my ſoul
'Twas night; on her fond hopes perpetual night;
A night which ſtruck a damp, a deadlier damp,
Than that which ſmote me from Philander's tomb.
Narciſſa follows ere his tomb is clos'd.
Woes cluſter; rare are ſolitary woes;
They love a train; they tread each other's heel;
Her death invades his mournful right, and claims
The grief that ſtarted from my lids for him;
Seizes the faithleſs, alienated tear,
Or ſhares it ere it falls. So frequent Death,
Sorrow he more than cauſes; he confounds;
For human ſighs his rival ſtrokes contend,
And make diſtreſs diſtraction. Oh, Philander!

What was thy fate? a double fate to me;
Portent and pain! a menace and a blow!
Like the black raven hov'ring o'er my peace,
Not leſs a bird of omen than of prey.
It call'd Narciſſa long before her hour;
It call'd her tender ſoul by break of bliſs,
From the firſt bloſſom, from the buds of joy;
Thoſe few our noxious fate unblaſted leaves
In this inclement clime of human life.
  Sweet Harmoniſt! and beautiful as ſweet!
And young as beautiful! and ſoft as young!
And gay as ſoft! and innocent as gay!
And happy (if aught happy here) as good!
For Fortune fond, had built her neſt on high.
Like birds quite exquiſite of note and plume,
Transfix'd by Fate (who loves a lofty mark)
How from the ſummit of the grove ſhe fell,
And left it unharmonious! all its charm
Extinguiſh'd in the wonders of her ſong!
Her ſong ſtill vibrates in my raviſh'd ear,
Still melting there, and with voluptuous pain
(O to forget her!) thrilling thro' my heart!
  Song, beauty, youth, love, virtue, joy! this group
Of bright ideas, flow'rs of Paradiſe,
As yet unforfeit! in one blaze we bind,
Kneel, and preſent it to the ſkies, as all
We gueſs of heav'n; and theſe were all her own;
And ſhe was mine; and I was—was!—moſt bleſt—

Gay title of the deepeſt miſery!
As bodies grow more pond'rous robb'd of life,
Good loſt weighs more in grief than gain'd in joy.
Like bloſſom'd trees o'erturn'd by vernal ſtorm,
Lovely in death the beauteous ruin lay;
And if in death ſtill lovely, lovelier there,
Far lovelier! pity ſwells the tide of love.
And will not the ſevere excuſe a ſigh?
Scorn the proud man that is aſham'd to weep.
Our tears indulg'd indeed deſerve our ſhame.
Ye that e'er loſt an angel, pity me!
Soon as the luſtre languiſh'd in her eye,
Dawning a dimmer day on human ſight,
And on her cheek, the reſidence of Spring,
Pale Omen ſat, and ſcatter'd fears around
On all that ſaw, (and who would ceaſe to gaze
That once had ſeen?) with haſte, parental haſte,
I flew, I ſnatch'd her from the rigid North,
Her native bed, on which bleak Boreas blew,
And bore her nearer to the ſun; the ſun
(As if the ſun could envy) check'd his beam,
Deny'd his wonted ſuccour; nor with more
Regret beheld her drooping than the bells
Of lilies, faireſt lilies, not ſo fair!
Queen Lilies! and ye painted Populace
Who dwell in fields, and lead ambroſial lives!
In morn and ev'ning dew your beauties bathe,
And drink the ſun, which gives your cheeks to glow,

And outbluſh (mine excepted) ev'ry fair;
You gladlier grew, ambitious of her hand,
Which often cropt your odours, incenſe meet
To thought ſo pure! Ye lovely Fugitives!
Coeval race with man! for man you ſmile;
Why not ſmile at him too? You ſhare, indeed,
His ſudden paſs, but not his conſtant pain.
  So man is made nought miniſters delight
But what his glowing paſſions can engage;
And glowing paſſions, bent on aught below,
Muſt, ſoon or late, with anguiſh turn the ſcale;
And anguiſh after rapture, how ſevere!
Rapture? bold man! who tempts the wrath divine,
By plucking fruit deny'd to mortal taſte,
While here preſuming on the rights of Heav'n.
For tranſport doſt thou call on ev'ry hour,
Lorenzo? At thy friend's expenſe be wiſe:
Lean not on earth; 'twill pierce thee to the heart;
A broken reed at beſt; but oft' a ſpear:
On its ſharp point Peace bleeds, and Hope expires.
  Turn, hopleſs thought! turn from her.—Thought repell'd,
Reſenting rallies, and wakes ev'ry woe.
Snatch'd ere thy prime! and in thy bridal hour!
And when kind Fortune, with thy lover, ſmil'd!
And when high-flavour'd thy freſh-op'ning joys!
And when blind man pronounc'd thy bliſs complete!
And on a foreign ſhore, where ſtrangers wept!
Strangers to thee, and, more ſurpriſing ſtill,

Strangers to kindneſs, wept. Their eyes let fall
Inhuman tears; ſtrange tears! that trickled down
From marble hearts! obdurate tenderneſs!
A tenderneſs that call'd them more ſevere,
In ſpite of Nature's ſoft perſuaſion ſteel'd:
While Nature melted Superſtition rav'd;
That mourn'd the dead, and this deny'd a grave.
  Their ſighs incens'd; ſighs foreign to the will!
Their will the tiger-ſuck'd outrag'd the ſtorm:
For, oh! the curs'd ungodlineſs of Zeal!
While ſinful fleſh relented, ſpirit nurs'd
In blind Infallibility's embrace,
The ſainted ſpirit petrify'd the breaſt,
Deny'd the charity of duſt to ſpread
O'er duſt! a charity their dogs enjoy.
What could I do? what ſuccour? what reſource?
With pious ſacrilege a grave I ſtole;
With impious piety that grave I wrong'd;
Short in my duty, coward in my grief!
More like her murderer than friend, I crept
With ſoft-ſuſpended ſtep, and, muffled deep
In midnight darkneſs, whiſper'd my laſt ſigh.
I whiſper'd what ſhould echo thro' their realms,
Nor writ her name, whoſe tomb ſhould pierce the ſkies.
Preſumptuous fear! how durſt I dread her foes,
While Nature's loudeſt dictates I obey'd?
Pardon neceſſity, bleſt Shade! of grief
And indignation rival burſts I pour'd;

Half-execration mingled with my pray'r;
Kindled at man, while I his God ador'd:
Sore grudg'd the ſavage land her ſacred duſt;
Stamp'd the curs'd ſoil; and with humanity
(Deny'd Narciſſa) wiſh'd them all a grave.
  Glows my reſentment into guilt? what guilt
Can equal violations of the dead?
The dead how ſacred! ſacred is the duſt
Of this heav'n-labour'd form, erect, divine!
This heav'n-aſſum'd, majeſtic, robe of earth
He deign'd to wear, who hung the vaſt expanſe
With azure bright, and cloth'd the ſun in gold.
When ev'ery paſſion ſleeps that can offend;
When ſtrikes us ev'ry motive that can melt;
When man can wreak his rancour uncontroll'd,
That ſtrongeſt curb on inſult and ill-will;
Then! ſpleen to duſt? the duſt of innocence?
An angel's duſt!—This Lucifer tranſcends;
When he contended for the Patriarch's bones,
'Twas not the ſtrife of malice, but of pride;
The ſtrife of pontiff pride, not pontiff gall.
  Far leſs than this is ſhocking in a race
Moſt wretched, but from ſtreams of mutual love;
And uncreated, but for love divine;
And but for love divine this moment loſt,
By Fate reſorb'd, and ſunk in endleſs night.
Man hard of heart to man! of horrid things
Moſt horrid! 'mid ſtupendous highly ſtrange!

Yet oft' his courteſies are ſmoother wrongs;
Pride brandiſhes the favours he confers,
And contumelious his humanity:
What then his vengeance? Hear it not, ye Stars!
And thou, pale Moon! turn paler at the ſound.
Man is to man the foreſt, ſureſt ill.
A previous blaſt foretels the riſing ſtorm;
O'erwhelming turrets threaten ere they fall;
Volcano's bellow ere they diſembogue;
Earth trembles ere her yawning jaws devour;
And ſmoke betray's the wide-conſuming fire:
Ruin from man is moſt conceal'd when near,
And ſends the dreadful tidings in the blow.
Is this the flight of Fancy? would it were!
Heav'n's ſov'reign ſaves all beings, but himſelf,
That hideous ſight, a naked human heart.
  Fir'd is the Muſe? and let the Muſe be fir'd:
Who not inflam'd when what he ſpeaks he feels,
And in the nerve moſt tender, in his friends?
Shame to mankind! Philander had his foes;
He felt the truths I ſing, and I in him:
But he nor I feel more. Paſt ills, Narciſſa!
Are ſunk in thee, thou recent wound of heart!
Which bleeds with other cares, with other pangs;
Pangs num'rous as the num'rous ills that ſwarm'd
O'er thy diſtinguiſh'd fate, and, cluſt'ring there,
Thick as the locuſt on the land of Nile,
Made death more deadly, and more dark the grave.

Reflect (if not forgot my touching tale)
How was each circumſtance with aſpics arm'd?
An aſpic each, and all an hydra woe.
What ſtrong Herculean virtue could ſuffice?—
Or is it virtue to be conquer'd here?
This hoary cheek a train of tears bedews,
And each tear mourns its own diſtinct diſtreſs,
And each diſtreſs, diſtinctly mourn'd, demands
Of grief ſtill more, as heighten'd by the whole.
A grief like this proprietors excludes:
Not friends alone ſuch obſequies deplore;
They make mankind the mourner; carry ſighs
Far as the fatal Fame can wing her way,
And turn the gayeſt thought of gayeſt age
Down their right channel, thro' the vale of death.

The vale of death! that huſh'd Cimmerian vale,
Where Darkneſs, brooding o'er unfiniſh'd fates,
With raven wing incumbent, waits the day
(Dread day!) that interdicts all future change!
That ſubterranean world, that land of ruin!
Fit walk, Lorenzo! for proud human thought!
There let my thought expatiate, and explore
Balſamic truths and healing ſentiments,
Of all moſt wanted, and moſt welcome, here.
For gay Lorenzo's ſake, and for thy own,
My Soul! "The fruits of dying friends ſurvey;
"Expoſe the vain of life; weigh life and death;
"Give Death his eulogy; thy fear ſubdue;

" And labour that firſt palm of noble minds,
" A manly ſcorn of terror from the tomb."
This harveſt reap from thy Narciſſa's grave.
As poets feign'd from Ajax' ſtreaming blood
Aroſe, with grief inſcrib'd, a mournful flow'r,
Let wiſdom bloſſom from my mortal wound.
And firſt, of dying friends; what fruit from theſe?
It brings us more than triple aid; an aid
To chaſe our thoughtleſsneſs, fear, pride, and guilt.
Our dying friends come o'er us like a cloud,
To damp our brainleſs ardours, and abate
That glare of life which often blinds the wiſe.
Our dying friends are pioneers, to ſmooth
Our rugged paſs to death; to break thoſe bars
Of terror and abhorrence Nature throws
Croſs our obſtructed way, and thus to make
Welcome, as ſafe, our port from ev'ry ſtorm.
Each friend by Fate ſnatch'd from us is a plume
Pluck'd from the wing of human vanity,
Which makes us ſtoop from our aërial heights,
And, damp'd with omen of our own deceaſe,
On drooping pinions of ambition lower'd,
Juſt ſkim earth's ſurface ere we break it up,
O'er putrid earth to ſcratch a little duſt,
And ſave the world a nuiſance. Smitten friends
Are angels ſent on errands full of love;
For us they languiſh, and for us they die:
And ſhall they languiſh, ſhall they die, in vain?

Ungrateful, ſhall we grieve their hov'ring ſhades,
Which wait the revolution in our hearts?
Shall we diſdain their ſilent, ſoft, addreſs,
Their poſthumous advice, and pious pray'r?
Senſeleſs as herds that graze their hallow'd graves,
Tread under foot their agonies and groans,
Fruſtrate their anguiſh, and deſtroy their deaths?
Lorenzo! no; the thought of death indulge;
Give it its wholeſome empire! let it reign,
That kind chaſtiſer of thy ſoul, in joy!
Its reign will ſpread thy glorious conqueſts far,
And ſtill the tumults of thy ruffled breaſt.
Auſpicious era! golden days, begin!
The thought of death ſhall, like a god, inſpire.
And why not think on death? Is life the theme
Of ev'ry thought? and wiſh of ev'ry hour?
And ſong of ev'ry joy? ſurpriſing truth!
The beaten ſpaniel's fondneſs not ſo ſtrange.
To wave the num'rous ills that ſeize on life
As their own property, their lawful prey;
Ere man has meaſur'd half his weary ſtage,
His luxuries have left him no reſerve,
No maiden reliſhes, unbroach'd delights:
On cold-ſerv'd repetitions he ſubſiſts,
And in the taſteleſs preſent chews the paſt;
Diſguſted chews, and ſcarce can ſwallow down.
Like laviſh anceſtors, his earlier years
Have diſinherited his future hours,

Which ſtarve on orts, and glean their former field.
  Live ever here, Lorenzo !—ſhocking thought!
So ſhocking, they who wiſh diſown it too;
Diſown from ſhame what they from folly crave.
Live ever in the womb, nor ſee the light?
For what live ever here ?—with lab'ring ſtep
To tread our former footſteps ? pace the round
Eternal ? to climb life's worn heavy wheel,
Which draws up nothing new ? to beat, and beat,
The beaten track ? to bid each wretched day
The former mock ? to ſurfeit on the ſame,
And yawn our joys ? or thank a miſery
For change, tho' ſad ? to ſee what we have ſeen ?
Hear, till unheard, the ſame old ſlabber'd tale ?
To taſte the taſted, and at each return
Leſs taſteful ? o'er our palates to decant
Another vintage ? ſtrain a flatter year
Thro' loaded veſſels, and a laxer tone ?
Crazy machines to grind earth's waſted fruits!
Ill ground, and worſe concocted! load, not life!
The rational foul kennels of exceſs!
Still-ſtreaming thoroughfares of dull debauch!
Trembling each gulp, leſt death ſhould ſnatch the bowl.
  Such of our fine ones is the wiſh refin'd!
So would they have it: elegant deſire!
Why not invite the bellowing ſtalls and wilds?
But ſuch examples might their riot awe.
Thro' want of virtue, that is, want of thought,

(Tho' on bright thought they father all their flights)
To what are they reduc'd? to love and hate
The ſame vain world; to cenſure and eſpouſe
This painted ſhrew of life, who calls them fool
Each moment of each day; to flatter bad
Thro' dread of worſe; to cling to this rude rock,
Barren, to them, of good, and ſharp with ills,
And hourly blacken'd with impending ſtorms,
And infamous for wrecks of human hope—
Scar'd at the gloomy gulf that yawns beneath.
Such are their triumphs! ſuch their pangs of joy!
 'Tis time, high time, to ſhift this diſmal ſcene.
This hugg'd, this hideous ſtate, what art can cure?
One only, but that one what all may reach:
Virtue—ſhe, wonder-working goddeſs! charms
That rock to bloom, and tames the painted ſhrew;
And, what will more ſurpriſe, Lorenzo! gives
To life's ſick, nauſeous, iteration, change,
And ſtraightens Nature's circle to a line.
Believ'ſt thou this, Lorenzo! lend an ear,
A patient ear, thou'lt bluſh to diſbelieve.
 A languid, leaden iteration reigns,
And ever muſt, o'er thoſe whoſe joys are joys
Of ſight, ſmell, taſte. The cuckow-ſeaſons ſing
The ſame dull note to ſuch as nothing prize
But what thoſe ſeaſons, from the teeming earth,
To doting ſenſe indulge: but nobler minds,
Which reliſh fruits unripen'd by the ſun,

Make their days various, various as the dyes
On the dove's neck, which wanton in his rays.
On minds of dove-like innocence poſſeſs'd,
On lighten'd minds, that baſk in virtue's beams,
Nothing hangs tedious, nothing old revolves
In that for which they long, for which they live.
Their glorious efforts, wing'd with heav'nly hope,
Each riſing morning ſees ſtill higher riſe;
Each bounteous dawn its novelty preſents
To worth maturing, new ſtrength, luſtre, fame;
While Nature's circle, like a chariot-wheel
Rolling beneath their elevated aims,
Makes their fair proſpect fairer ev'ry hour,
Advancing virtue in a line to bliſs;
Virtue, which Chriſtian motives beſt inſpire!
And bliſs, which Chriſtian ſchemes alone enſure!
  And ſhall we then, for virtue's ſake, commence
Apoſtates, and turn infidels for joy?
A truth it is few doubt, but fewer truſt,
"He ſins againſt this life who ſlights the next."
What is this life? how few their fav'rite know?
Fond in the dark, and blind in our embrace,
By paſſionately loving life we make
Lov'd Life unlovely, hugging her to death.
We give to time eternity's regard,
And dreaming, take our paſſage for our port.
Life has no value as an end, but means;
An end deplorable! a means divine!

When 'tis our all, 'tis nothing; worſe than nought;
A neſt of pains; when held as nothing, much.
Like ſome fair hum'riſts, life is moſt enjoy'd
When courted leaſt; moſt worth when diſeſteem'd;
Then 'tis the ſeat of comfort, rich in peace;
In proſpect richer far; important! awful!
Not to be mention'd but with ſhouts of praiſe!
Not to be thought on but with tides of joy!
The mighty baſis of eternal bliſs!

Where now the barren rock? the painted ſhrew?
Where now, Lorenzo! life's eternal round?
Have I not made my triple promiſe good?
Vain is the world, but only to the vain.
To what compare we then this varying ſcene,
Whoſe worth, ambiguous, riſes and declines?
Waxes and wanes? (in all propitious Night
Aſſiſts me here) compare it to the moon;
Dark in herſelf, and indigent, but rich
In borrow'd luſtre from a higher ſphere.
When groſs guilt interpoſes, lab'ring earth,
O'erſhadow'd, mourns a deep eclipſe of joy;
Her joys, at brighteſt, pallid to that font
Of full effulgent glory whence they flow.

Nor is that glory diſtant. Oh, Lorenzo!
A good man and an angel! theſe between
How thin the barrier? what divides their fate?
Perhaps a moment, or perhaps a year;
Or if an age, it is a moment ſtill;

A moment, or eternity's forgot.
Then be what once they were who now are gods;
Be what Philander was, and claim the ſkies.
Starts timid Nature at the gloomy paſs?
The ſoft tranſition call it, and be cheer'd:
Such it is often, and why not to thee?
To hope the beſt is pious, brave, and wiſe,
And may itſelf procure what it preſumes.
Life is much flatter'd, Death is much traduc'd;
Compare the rivals, and the kinder crown.
"Strange competition!"—True, Lorenzo! ſtrange!
So little life can caſt into the ſcale.
 Life makes the ſoul dependent on the duſt,
Death gives her wings to mount above the ſpheres.
Thro' chinks, ſtyl'd organs, dim life peeps at light;
Death burſts th'involving cloud, and all is day:
All eye, all ear, the diſembody'd power.
Death has feign'd evils nature ſhall not feel;
Life ills ſubſtantial wiſdom cannot ſhun.
Is not the mighty Mind, that ſon of heav'n!
By tyrant Life dethron'd, impriſon'd, pain'd?
By Death enlarg'd, ennobled, deify'd?
Death but intombs the body, life the ſoul.
 "Is Death then guiltleſs? How he marks his way
"With dreadful waſte of what deſerves to ſhine!
"Art, genius, fortune, elevated power!
"With various luſtres theſe light up the world,
"Which death puts out, and darkens human race."

I grant, Lorenzo! this indictment just:
The sage, peer, potentate, king, conqueror!
Death humbles these; more barb'rous Life the man.
Life is the triumph of our mould'ring clay;
Death of the spirit infinite! divine!
Death has no dread but what frail life imparts,
Nor life true joy but what kind death improves.
No bliss has life to boast, till death can give
Far greater. Life's a debtor to the grave;
Dark lattice! letting in eternal day.
  Lorenzo! blush at fondness for a life
Which sends celestial souls on errands vile,
To cater for the sense, and serve at boards
Where ev'ry ranger of the wilds, perhaps
Each reptile, justly claims our upper-hand.
Luxurious feast! a soul, a soul immortal,
In all the dainties of a brute bemir'd!
Lorenzo! blush at terror for a death
Which gives thee to repose in festive bowers,
Where nectars sparkle, angels minister,
And more than angels share, and raise, and crown,
And eternize, the birth, bloom, bursts of bliss.
What need I more? O Death! the palm is thine.
  Then welcome, Death! thy dreaded harbingers,
Age and disease; Disease, tho' long my guest,
That plucks my nerves, those tender strings of life,
Which pluck'd a little more will toll the bell
That calls my few friends to my funeral;

Where feeble Nature drops, perhaps, a tear,
While Reaſon and Religion, better taught,
Congratulate the dead, and crown his tomb
With wreath triumphant. Death is victory;
It binds in chains the raging ills of life:
Luſt and Ambition, Wrath and Avarice,
Dragg'd at his chariot-wheel, applaud his power.
That ills corroſive, cares importunate,
Are not immortal too, O Death! is thine.
Our day of diſſolution!—name it right,
'Tis our great pay-day; 'tis our harveſt, rich
And ripe. What tho' the ſickle, ſometimes keen,
Juſt ſcars us as we reap the golden grain?
More than thy balm, O Gilead! heals the wound.
Birth's feeble cry, and Death's deep diſmal groan,
Are ſlender tributes low-tax'd Nature pays
For mighty gain: the gain of each a life!
But, O! the laſt the former ſo tranſcends,
Life dies compar'd; Life lives beyond the grave.
And feel I, Death! no joy from thought of thee?
Death! the great counſellor, who man inſpires
With ev'ry nobler thought and fairer deed!
Death! the deliverer who reſcues man!
Death! the rewarder, who the reſcu'd crowns!
Death! that abſolves my birth, a curſe without it!
Rich Death! that realizes all my cares,
Toils, virtues, hopes; without it a chimera!
Death! of all pain the period, not of joy:

Joy's ſource and ſubject ſtill ſubſiſt unhurt;
One in my ſoul, and one in her great ſire,
Tho' the four winds were warring for my duſt.
Yes, and from winds and waves, and central night,
Tho' priſon'd there, my duſt, too, I reclaim,
(To duſt when drop proud Nature's proudeſt ſpheres)
And live entire. Death is the crown of life:
Were death deny'd, poor man would live in vain:
Were death deny'd, to live would not be life:
Were death deny'd, ev'n fools would wiſh to die.
Death wounds to cure; we fall, we riſe, we reign!
Spring from our fetters, faſten in the ſkies,
Where blooming Eden withers in our ſight.
Death gives us more than was in Eden loſt:
This king of terrors is the prince of peace.
When ſhall I die to vanity, pain, death?
When ſhall I die?—when ſhall I live for ever?

End of Night Third.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT IV.

THE CHRISTIAN TRIUMPH.

Containing

OUR ONLY CURE FOR THE FEAR OF DEATH,

AND PROPER SENTIMENTS OF HEART ON THAT INESTIMABLE BLESSING.

Humbly inſcribed

TO THE HON. MR. YORKE.

A much-indebted Muſe, O Yorke! intrudes.
Amid the ſmiles of fortune and of youth,
Thine ear is patient of a ſerious ſong.
How deep implanted in the breaſt of man
The dread of death? I ſing its ſov'reign cure.
Why ſtart at Death? where is he? Death arriv'd,
Is paſt; not come, or gone; he's never here.
Ere hope, ſenſation fails. Black-boding man
Receives, not ſuffers, Death's tremendous blow.
The knell, the ſhroud, the mattock, and the grave;
The deep damp vault, the darkneſs, and the worm;
Theſe are the bugbears of a winter's eve,
The terrors of the living, not the dead;
Imagination's fool, and Error's wretch.

Man makes a death which Nature never made,
Then on the point of his own fancy falls,
And feels a thoufand deaths in fearing one.
But were Death frightful, what has age to fear?
If prudent, age fhould meet the friendly foe,
And fhelter in his hofpitable gloom.
I fcarce can meet a monument but holds
My younger; ev'ry date cries—"Come away."
And what recalls me? look the world around,
And tell me what. The wifeft cannot tell.
Should any born of woman give his thought
Full range on juft Diflike's unbounded field;
Of things the vanity, of men the flaws;
Flaws in the beft; the many flaw all o'er;
As leopards fpotted, or as Ethiops dark;
Vivacious ill; good dying immature;
(How immature Narciffa's marble tells)
And at its death bequeathing endlefs pain;
His heart, tho' bold, would ficken at the fight,
And fpend itfelf in fighs for future fcenes.
But grant to life (and juft it is to grant
To lucky life) fome perquifites of joy;
A time there is when, like a thrice-told tale,
Long-rifled life of fweet can yield no more,
But from our comment on the comedy,
Pleafing reflections on parts well-fuftain'd,
Or purpos'd emendations where we fail'd,
Or hopes of plaudits from our candid Judge,

When, on their exit, ſouls are bid unrobe,
Toſs Fortune back her tinſel and her plume,
And drop this maſk of fleſh behind the ſcene.
  With me that time is come; my world is dead;
A new world riſes, and new manners reign.
Foreign comedians, a ſpruce band! arrive,
To puſh me from the ſcene, or hiſs me there.
What a pert race ſtarts up! the ſtrangers gaze,
And I at them; my neighbour is unknown;
Nor that the worſt. Ah me! the dire effect
Of loit'ring here, of death defrauded long.
Of old ſo gracious (and let that ſuffice)
My very maſter knows me not.———
  Shall I dare ſay peculiar is the fate?
I've been ſo long remember'd I'm forgot.
An object ever preſſing dims the ſight,
And hides behind its ardour to be ſeen.
When in his courtiers' ears I pour my plaint,
They drink it as the nectar of the great,
And ſqueeze my hand, and beg me come to-morrow.
Refuſal! canſt thou wear a ſmoother form?
  Indulge me, nor conceive I drop my theme.
Who cheapens life abates the fear of death.
Twice told the period ſpent on ſtubborn Troy,
Court-favour, yet untaken, I beſiege,
Ambition's ill-judg'd effort to be rich.
Alas! ambition makes my little leſs,
Embitt'ring the poſſeſs'd. Why wiſh for more?

Wiſhing, of all employments is the worſt;
Philoſophy's reverſe, and health's decay!
Were I as plump as ſtall'd Theology,
Wiſhing would waſte me to this ſhade again.
Were I as wealthy as a South-ſea dream,
Wiſhing is an expedient to be poor.
Wiſhing, that conſtant hectic of a fool,
Caught at a court, purg'd off by purer air
And ſimpler diet, gifts of rural life!
  Bleſt be that hand divine which gently laid
My heart at reſt beneath this humble ſhed.
The world's a ſtately bark, on dang'rous ſeas
With pleaſure ſeen, but boarded at our peril:
Here on a ſingle plank, thrown ſafe aſhore,
I hear the tumult of the diſtant throng,
As that of ſeas remote, or dying ſtorms,
And meditate on ſcenes more ſilent ſtill,
Purſue my theme, and fight the fear of death.
Here, like a ſhepherd gazing from his hut,
Touching his reed, or leaning on his ſtaff,
Eager Ambition's fiery chaſe I ſee;
I ſee the circling hunt of noiſy men
Burſt law's incloſure, leap the mounds of right,
Purſuing and purſu'd, each other's prey;
As wolves for rapine, as the fox for wiles,
Till Death, that mighty hunter, earths them all.
  Why all this toil for triumphs of an hour?
What tho' we wade in wealth, or ſoar in fame?

Earth's higheſt ſtation ends in, "Here he lies;"
And "duſt to duſt" concludes her nobleſt ſong.
If this ſong lives, poſterity ſhall know
One, tho' in Britain born, with courtiers bred,
Who thought ev'n gold might come a day too late,
Nor on his ſubtle death-bed plann'd his ſcheme
For future vacancies in church or ſtate,
Some avocation deeming it—to die;
Unbit by rage canine of dying rich,
Guilt's blunder! and the loudeſt laugh of Hell.
O my Coëvals! remnants of yourſelves!
Poor human ruins tott'ring o'er the grave!
Shall we, ſhall aged men, like aged trees,
Strike deeper their vile root, and cloſer cling,
Still more enamour'd of this wretched ſoil?
Shall our pale wither'd hands be ſtill ſtretch'd out,
Trembling, at once, with eagerneſs and age?
With av'rice and convulſions, graſping hard?
Graſping at air! for what has earth beſide?
Man wants but little, nor that little long:
How ſoon muſt he reſign his very duſt,
Which frugal Nature lent him for an hour!
Years unexperienc'd ruſh on num'rous ills:
And ſoon as man, expert from time, has found
The key of life, it opes the gates of death.
When in this vale of years I backward look,
And miſs ſuch numbers, numbers, too, of ſuch
Firmer in health, and greener in their age,

And ſtricter on their guard, and fitter far
To play life's ſubtle game, I ſcarce believe
I ſtill ſurvive. And am I fond of life,
Who ſcarce can think it poſſible I live?
Alive by miracle! or, what is next,
Alive by Mead! if I am ſtill alive,
Who long have bury'd what gives life to live,
Firmneſs of nerve, and energy of thought.
Life's lee is not more ſhallow than impure
And vapid: Senſe and Reaſon ſhew the door,
Call for my bier, and point me to the duſt.
O thou great Arbiter of life and death!
Nature's immortal, immaterial ſun!
Whoſe all-prolific beam late call'd me forth
From darkneſs, teeming darkneſs, where I lay
The worm's inferior, and, in rank, beneath
The duſt I tread on, high to bear my brow,
To drink the ſpirit of the golden day,
And triumph in exiſtence, and couldſt know
No motive but my bliſs, and haſt ordain'd
A riſe in bleſſing! with the Patriarch's joy
Thy call I follow to the land unknown;
I truſt in thee, and know in whom I truſt:
Or life or death is equal; neither weighs;
All weight in this—O let me live to thee!
Tho' Nature's terrors, thus, may be repreſt,
Still frowns grim Death; guilt points the tyrant's ſpear.
And whence all human guilt? From death forgot.

Ah me! too long I ſet at nought the ſwarm
Of friendly warnings which around me flew,
And ſmil'd unſmitten. Small my cauſe to ſmile!
Death's admonitions, like ſhafts upwards ſhot,
More dreadful by delay, the longer ere
They ſtrike our hearts the deeper is their wound:
O think how deep, Lorenzo! here it ſtings;
Who can appeaſe its anguiſh? How it burns!
What hand the barb'd, envenom'd, thought can draw?
What healing hand can pour the balm of peace,
And turn my ſight undaunted on the tomb?
With joy,—with grief, that healing hand I ſee:
Ah! too conſpicuous! it is fix'd on high.
On high?—what means my frenzy? I blaſpheme:
Alas! how low? how far beneath the ſkies?
The ſkies it form'd, and now it bleeds for me—
But bleeds the balm I want—yet ſtill it bleeds;
Draw the dire ſteel—ah, no! the dreadful bleſſing
What heart or can ſuſtain or dares forego?
There hangs all human hope; that nail ſupports
The falling univerſe: that gone we drop;
Horror receives us, and the diſmal wiſh
Creation had been ſmother'd in her birth—
Darkneſs his curtain, and his bed the duſt,
When ſtars and ſun are duſt beneath his throne;
In heav'n itſelf can ſuch indulgence dwell?
O what a groan was there! a groan not his:
He ſeiz'd our dreadful right, the load ſuſtain'd,

And heav'd the mountain from a guilty world.
A thouſand worlds, ſo bought, were bought too dear;
Senſations new in angels' boſoms riſe,
Suſpend their ſong, and make a pauſe in bliſs.
O for their ſong to reach my lofty theme!
Inſpire me, Night! with all thy tuneful ſpheres,
Whilſt I with ſeraphs ſhare ſeraphic themes,
And ſhew to men the dignity of man,
Leſt I blaſpheme my ſubject with my ſong.
Shall Pagan pages glow celeſtial flame,
And Chriſtian languiſh? On our hearts, not heads,
Falls the foul infamy. My heart! awake:
What can awake thee, unawak'd by this,
"Expended Diety on human weal?"
Feel the great truths which burſt the tenfold night
Of Heathen error with a golden flood
Of endleſs day. To feel is to be fir'd;
And to believe, Lorenzo! is to feel.
Thou moſt indulgent, moſt tremendous Pow'r!
Still more tremendous for thy wondrous love!
That arms with awe more awful thy commands,
And foul tranſgreſſion dips in ſev'nfold guilt;
How our hearts tremble at thy love immenſe!
In love immenſe, inviolably juſt!
Thou, rather than thy juſtice ſhould be ſtain'd,
Didſt ſtain the croſs; and, work of wonders far
The greateſt, that thy deareſt far might bleed.
Bold thought! ſhall I dare ſpeak it or repreſs?

Should man more execrate or boaſt the guilt
Which rous'd ſuch vengeance? which ſuch love inflam'd?
O'er guilt (how mountainous!) with outſtretch'd arms
Stern Juſtice and ſoft-ſmiling Love, embrace,
Supporting, in full majeſty, thy throne,
When ſeem'd its majeſty to need ſupport,
Or that, or man, inevitably loſt:
What but the fathomleſs of thought divine
Could labour ſuch expedient from deſpair,
And reſcue both? Both reſcue! both exalt!
O how are both exalted by the deed!
The wondrous deed! or ſhall I call it more?
A wonder in Omnipotence itſelf!
A myſtery no leſs to gods than men!
  Not thus our infidels th' Eternal draw,
A God all-o'er conſummate, abſolute,
Full orb'd, in his whole round of rays complete:
They ſet at odds Heav'n's jarring attributes,
And with one excellence another wound;
Maim Heav'n's perfection, break its equal beams,
Bid mercy triumph over—God himſelf,
Undeify'd by their opprobrious praiſe.
A God all mercy is a God unjuſt.
  Ye brainleſs Wits! ye baptiz'd Infidels!
Ye worſe for mending! waſh'd to fouler ſtains!
The ranſom was paid down; the fund of heav'n,
Heav'n's inexhauſtible, exhauſted fund,
Amazing and amaz'd, pour'd forth the price,

All price beyond: tho' curious to compute,
Archangels fail'd to caſt the mighty ſum:
Its value vaſt ungraſp'd by minds create,
For ever hides and glows in the Supreme.
And was the ranſom paid? it was; and paid
(What can exalt the bounty more?) for you.
The ſun beheld it.—No, the ſhocking ſcene
Drove back his chariot: midnight veil'd his face;
Not ſuch as this, not ſuch as Nature makes;
A midnight Nature ſhudder'd to behold;
A midnight new! a dread eclipſe (without
Oppoſing ſpheres) from her Creator's frown!
Sun! didſt thou fly thy Maker's pain? or ſtart
At that enormous load of human guilt
Which bow'd his bleſſed head, o'erwhelm'd his croſs,
Made groan the centre, burſt earth's marble womb
With pangs, ſtrange pangs! deliver'd of her dead?
Hell howl'd; and heav'n that hour let fall a tear:
Heav'n wept, that men might ſmile! Heav'n bled, that man
Might never die!———
And is devotion virtue? 'tis compell'd.
What heart of ſtone but glows at thoughts like theſe?
Such contemplations mount us, and ſhould mount
The mind ſtill higher, nor ever glance on man
Unraptur'd, uninflam'd.—Where roll my thoughts
To reſt from wonders? other wonders riſe,
And ſtrike where'er they roll: my ſoul is caught:
Heav'n's ſov'reign bleſſings, cluſt'ring from the croſs,

Ruſh on her, in a throng, and cloſe her round,
The priſ'ner of amaze!—In his bleſt life
I ſee the path, and in his death the price,
And in his great aſcent the proof ſupreme,
Of immortality.—And did he riſe?
Hear, O ye Nations! hear it, O ye Dead!
He roſe! he roſe! he burſt the bars of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlaſting Gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who left
His throne of glory for the pang of death.
Lift up your heads, ye everlaſting Gates!
And give the King of glory to come in.
Who is the King of glory? he who ſlew
The rav'nous foe that gorg'd all human race!
The King of glory he, whoſe glory fill'd
Heav'n with amazement at his love to man,
And with divine complacency beheld
Pow'rs moſt illumin'd wilder'd in the theme.
 The theme, the joy, how then ſhall man ſuſtain?
Oh, the burſt gates! cruſh'd ſting! demoliſh'd throne!
Laſt gaſp of vanquiſh'd Death. Shout, earth and heav'n,
This ſum of good to man! whoſe nature then
Took wing, and mounted with him from the tomb.
Then, then, I roſe; then firſt Humanity
Triumphant paſt the cryſtal ports of light,
(Stupendous gueſt!) and ſeiz'd eternal youth,
Seiz'd in our name. E'er ſince 'tis blaſphemous

To call man mortal. Man's mortality
Was then transferr'd to death; and heav'n's duration
Unalienably ſeal'd to this frail frame,
This child of duſt.—Man, all-immortal! hail;
Hail, Heav'n! all laviſh of ſtrange gifts to man!
Thine all the glory, man's the boundleſs bliſs.
Where am I rapt by this triumphant theme,
On Chriſtian joy's exulting wing, above
Th'Aonian mount!—Alas! ſmall cauſe for joy!
What if to pain immortal? if extent
Of being, to preclude a cloſe of woe?
Where, then, my boaſt of immortality?
I boaſt it ſtill, tho' cover'd o'er with guilt:
For guilt, not innocence, his life he pour'd;
'Tis guilt alone can juſtify his death;
Nor that, unleſs his death can juſtify
Relenting guilt in Heav'n's indulgent ſight.
If, ſick of folly, I relent, he writes
My name in heav'n with that inverted ſpear
(A ſpear deep-dipt in blood!) which pierc'd his ſide,
And open'd there a font for all mankind,
Who ſtrive, who combat crimes, to drink and live:
This, only this, ſubdues the fear of death.
And what is this?—Survey the wondrous cure,
And at each ſtep let higher wonder riſe!
" Pardon for infinite offence! and pardon
" Thro' means that ſpeak its value infinite!
" A pardon bought with blood! with blood divine!

" With blood divine of him I made my foe!
" Perſiſted to provoke! tho' woo'd and aw'd;
" Bleſt, and chaſtis'd, a flagrant rebel ſtill!
" A rebel 'midſt the thunders of his throne!
" Nor I alone! a rebel univerſe!
" My ſpecies up in arms! not one exempt!
" Yet for the fouleſt of the foul he dies;
" Moſt joy'd for the redeem'd from deepeſt guilt!
" As if our race were held of higheſt rank,
" And Godhead dearer, as more kind to man!"
Bound ev'ry heart! and ev'ry boſom burn!
O what a ſcale of miracles is here!
Its loweſt round high planted on the ſkies,
Its tow'ring ſummit loſt beyond the thought
Of man or angel! Oh that I could climb
The wonderful aſcent with equal praiſe!
Praiſe! flow for ever, (if aſtoniſhment
Will give thee leave) my praiſe! for ever flow;
Praiſe ardent, cordial, conſtant, to high Heav'n
More fragrant than Arabia ſacrific'd,
And all her ſpicy mountains in a flame.
So dear, ſo due to Heav'n, ſhall Praiſe deſcend
With her ſoft plume (from plauſive angels' wing
Firſt pluck'd by man) to tickle mortal ears,
Thus diving in the pockets of the great?
Is praiſe the perquiſite of ev'ry paw,
Tho' black as hell, that grapples well for gold?
Oh love of gold! thou meaneſt of amours!

Shall Praiſe her odours waſte on virtues dead,
Embalm the baſe, perfume the ſtench of guilt,
Earn dirty bread by waſhing Ethiops fair,
Removing filth, or ſinking it from ſight,
A ſcavenger in ſcenes where vacant poſts,
Like gibbets yet untenanted, expect
Their future ornaments? From courts and thrones
Return, apoſtate Praiſe! thou vagabond!
Thou proſtitute! to thy firſt love return,
Thy firſt, thy greateſt, once unrivall'd theme.
 There flow redundant, like Meander flow,
Back to thy fountain, to that parent pow'r
Who gives the tongue to ſound, the thought to ſoar,
The ſoul to be. Men homage pay to men,
Thoughtleſs beneath whoſe dreadful eye they bow,
In mutual awe profound, of clay to clay,
Of guilt to guilt, and turn their backs on thee,
Great Sire! whom thrones celeſtial ceaſeleſs ſing,
To proſtrate angels an amazing ſcene!
O the preſumption of man's awe for man!—
Man's Author! End! Reſtorer! Law! and Judge!
Thine all; Day thine, and thine this gloom of Night,
With all her wealth, with all her radiant worlds.
What night eternal but a frown from thee?
What heav'n's meridian glory but thy ſmile?
And ſhall not praiſe be thine, not human praiſe,
While heav'n's high hoſt on hallelujahs live?
 O may I breathe no longer than I breathe

My ſoul in praiſe to him who gave my ſoul,
And all her infinite of proſpect fair,
Cut thro' the ſhades of hell, great Love! by thee,
Oh moſt adorable! moſt unador'd!
Where ſhall that praiſe begin which ne'er ſhould end?
Where'er I turn, what claim on all applauſe!
How is Night's ſable mantle labour'd o'er,
How richly wrought with attributes divine!
What wiſdom ſhines! what love! This midnight pomp,
This gorgeous arch, with golden worlds inlaid!
Built with divine ambition! nought to thee;
For others this profuſion. Thou apart,
Above! beyond! Oh tell me, mighty Mind!
Where art thou? Shall I dive into the deep?
Call to the ſun? or aſk the roaring winds
For their Creator? ſhall I queſtion loud
The thunder, if in that th' Almighty dwells?
Or holds he furious ſtorms in ſtraiten'd reins,
And bids fierce whirlwinds wheel his rapid car?
What mean theſe queſtions?—Trembling I retract;
My proſtrate ſoul adores the preſent God.
Praiſe I a diſtant Deity? He tunes
My voice (if tun'd;) the nerve that writes ſuſtains:
Wrapp'd in his being I reſound his praiſe:
But tho' paſt all diffus'd, without a ſhore
His eſſence, local is his throne (as meet)
To gather the diſpers'd (as ſtandards call
The liſted from afar;) to fix a point,

A central point, collective of his ſons,
Since finite ev'ry nature but his own.
The nameleſs He, whoſe nod is Nature's birth,
And Nature's ſhield the ſhadow of his hand;
Her diſſolution his ſuſpended ſmile!
The great Firſt-Laſt! pavilion'd high he ſits
In darkneſs, from exceſſive ſplendour borne,
By gods unſeen, unleſs thro' luſtre loſt.
His glory, to created glory, bright,
As that to central horrors: he looks down
On all that ſoars, and ſpans immenſity.
Tho' night unnumber'd worlds unfolds to view,
Boundleſs Creation! what art thou? a beam,
A mere effluvium of his majeſty.
And ſhall an atom of this atom-world
Mutter, in duſt and ſin, the theme of heav'n?
Down to the centre ſhould I ſend my thought
Thro' beds of glitt'ring ore and glowing gems,
Their beggar'd blaze wants luſtre for my lay;
Goes out in darkneſs: if, on tow'ring wing,
I ſend it thro' the boundleſs vault of ſtars,
(The ſtars, tho' rich, what droſs their gold to thee,
Great! good! wiſe! wonderful! eternal King!)
If to thoſe conſcious ſtars thy throne around,
Praiſe ever-pouring, and imbibing bliſs,
And aſk their ſtrain; they want it, more they want,
Poor their abundance, humble their ſublime,
Languid their energy, their ardour cold;

Indebted ſtill, their higheſt rapture burns,
Short of its mark, defective, tho' divine.
 Still more—this theme is man's, and man's alone;
Their vaſt appointments reach it not; they ſee
On earth a bounty not indulg'd on high,
And downward look for heav'n's ſuperior praiſe!
Firſt-born of Ether! high in fields of light!
View man, to ſee the glory of your God!
Could angels envy, they had envy'd here:
And ſome did envy; and the reſt, tho' gods,
Yet ſtill gods unredeem'd, (there triumphs man,
Tempted to weigh the duſt againſt the ſkies)
They leſs would feel, tho' more adorn my theme.
They ſung creation (for in that they ſhar'd)
How roſe in melody that child of Love!
Creation's great ſuperior, man! is thine;
Thine is redemption; they juſt gave the key;
'Tis thine to raiſe and eternize the ſong,
Tho' human, yet divine; for ſhould not this
Raiſe man o'er man, and kindle ſeraphs here?
Redemption! 'twas creation more ſublime;
Redemption! 'twas the labour of the Skies;
Far more than labour—it was death in heav'n.
A truth ſo ſtrange, 'twere bold to think it true,
If not far bolder ſtill to diſbelieve.
 Here pauſe and ponder. Was there death in heav'n?
What then on earth? on earth, which ſtruck the blow?
Who ſtruck it? Who?—O how is man enlarg'd,

Seen thro' this medium! How the pygmy tow'rs!
How counterpois'd his origin from duſt!
How counterpois'd to duſt his ſad return!
How voided his vaſt diſtance from the ſkies!
How near he preſſes on the ſeraph's wing!
Which is the ſeraph? which the born of clay?
How this demonſtrates, thro' the thickeſt cloud
Of guilt and clay condens'd, the ſon of Heav'n!
The double ſon; the made, and the re-made!
And ſhall Heav'n's double property be loſt?
Man's double madneſs only can deſtroy.
To man the bleeding Croſs has promis'd all;
The bleeding Croſs has ſworn eternal grace.
Who gave his life, what grace ſhall he deny?
O Ye! who from this rock of ages leap
Apoſtates, plunging headlong in the deep!
What cordial joy, what conſolation ſtrong,
Whatever winds ariſe, or billows roll!
Our int'reſt in the Maſter of the ſtorm:
Cling there, and in wreck'd Nature's ruins ſmile,
While vile apoſtates tremble in a calm.
  Man! know thyſelf: all wiſdom centres there.
To none man ſeems ignoble but to man.
Angels that grandeur men o'erlook admire:
How long ſhall human nature be their book,
Degen'rate Mortal! and unread by thee?
The beam dim reaſon ſheds ſhews wonders there:
What high contents! illuſtrious faculties!

But the grand comment, which diſplays at full
Our human height, ſcarce ſever'd from divine,
By Heav'n compos'd, was publiſh'd on the croſs.
  Who looks on that, and ſees not in himſelf
An awful ſtranger, a terreſtrial god?
A glorious partner with the Deity
In that high attribute, immortal life?
If a God bleeds, he bleeds not for a worm.
I gaze, and as I gaze my mounting ſoul
Catches ſtrange fire, Eternity! at thee,
And drops the world—or, rather, more enjoys.
How chang'd the face of Nature! how improv'd!
What ſeem'd a chaos ſhines a glorious world,
Or what a world an Eden; heighten'd all!
It is another ſcene! another ſelf!
And ſtill another, as time rolls along,
And that a ſelf far more illuſtrious ſtill.
Beyond long ages, yet roll'd up in ſhades
Unpierc'd by bold Conjecture's keeneſt ray,
What evolutions of ſurpriſing Fate!
How Nature opens, and receives my ſoul
In boundleſs walks of raptur'd thought! where gods
Encounter and embrace me! What new births
Of ſtrange adventure, foreign to the ſun,
Where what now charms, perhaps whate'er exiſts,
Old time, and fair creation, are forgot!
  Is this extravagant? of man we form
Extravagant conception to be juſt:

Conception unconfin'd wants wings to reach him;
Beyond its reach the Godhead only more.
He the great Father! kindled at one flame
The world of rationals; one ſpirit pour'd
From ſpirits' awful Fountain; pour'd himſelf
Thro' all their ſouls, but not in equal ſtream,
Profuſe, or frugal, of th' inſpiring God,
As his wiſe plan demanded; and when paſt
Their various trials, in their various ſpheres,
If they continue rational, as made,
Reſorbs them all into himſelf again,
His throne their centre, and his ſmile their crown.

Why doubt we, then, the glorious truth to ſing,
Tho' yet unſung, as deem'd, perhaps, too bold?
Angels are men of a ſuperior kind;
Angels are men in lighter habit clad,
High o'er celeſtial mountains wing'd in flight;
And men are angels, loaded for an hour,
Who wade this miry vale, and climb with pain,
And ſlipp'ry ſtep, the bottom of the ſteep.
Angels their failings, mortals have their praiſe:
While here, of corps ethereal, ſuch enroll'd,
And ſummon'd to the glorious ſtandard ſoon,
Which flames eternal crimſon thro' the ſkies.
Nor are our brothers thoughtleſs of their kin,
Yet abſent; but not abſent from their love.
Michael has fought our battles; Raphael ſung
Our triumphs; Gabriel on our errands flown,

Sent by the Sov'reign: and are these, O Man!
Thy friends, thy warm allies? and thou (shame burn
The cheek to cinder!) rival to the brute?
Religion's all. Descending from the skies
To wretched man, the goddess in her left
Holds out this world, and in her right the next.
Religion! the sole voucher man is man;
Supporter sole of man above himself;
Ev'n in this night of frailty, change, and death,
She gives the soul a soul that acts a god.
Religion! providence! an after-state!
Here is firm footing; here is solid rock;
This can support us; all is sea besides;
Sinks under us; bestorms, and then devours.
His hand the good man fastens on the skies,
And bids earth roll, nor feels her idle whirl.
As when a wretch, from thick polluted air,
Darkness and stench, and suffocating damps,
And dungeon horrors, by kind Fate discharg'd,
Climbs some fair eminence, where ether pure
Surrounds him, and Elysian prospects rise,
His heart exults, his spirits cast their load,
As if new-born he triumphs in the change;
So joys the soul, when from inglorious aims
And sordid sweets, from feculence and froth
Of ties terrestrial set at large, she mounts
To Reason's region, her own element,
Breathes hopes immortal, and affects the skies.

Religion! thou the ſoul of happineſs,
And, groaning Calvary! of thee: there ſhine
The nobleſt truths; there ſtrongeſt motives ſting;
There ſacred violence aſſaults the ſoul;
There nothing but compulſion is forborne.
Can love allure us? or can terror awe?
He weeps!—the falling drop puts out the ſun.
He ſighs!—the ſigh earth's deep foundation ſhakes.
If in his love ſo terrible, what then
His wrath inflam'd? his tenderneſs on fire?
Like ſoft, ſmooth oil, outblazing other fires?
Can pray'r, can praiſe, avert it?—Thou, my all!
My theme! my inſpiration! and my crown!
My ſtrength in age! my riſe in low eſtate!
My ſoul's ambition, pleaſure, wealth!—my world!
My light in darkneſs! and my life in death!
My boaſt thro' time! bliſs thro' eternity!
Eternity, too ſhort to ſpeak thy praiſe,
Or fathom thy profound of love to man!
To man of men the meaneſt, ev'n to me;
My ſacrifice! my God!—what things are theſe!
What then art thou? by what name ſhall I call thee?
Knew I the name devout archangels uſe,
Devout archangels ſhould the name enjoy,
By me unrivall'd; thouſands more ſublime,
None half ſo dear as that which, tho' unſpoke,
Still glows at heart. O how Omnipotence
Is loſt in love! thou great Philanthropiſt!

Father of angels! but the friend of man!
Like Jacob, fondeſt of the younger born!
Thou who didſt ſave him, ſnatch the ſmoking brand
From out the flames, and quench it in thy blood!
How art thou pleas'd by bounty to diſtreſs!
To make us groan beneath our gratitude,
Too big for birth! to favour and confound;
To challenge, and to diſtance all return!
Of laviſh love ſtupendous heights to ſoar,
And leave Praiſe panting in the diſtant vale!
Thy right too great defrauds thee of thy due,
And ſacrilegious our ſublimeſt ſong.
But ſince the naked will obtains thy ſmile,
Beneath this monument of praiſe unpaid,
And future life ſymphonious to my ſtrain,
(That nobleſt hymn to Heav'n!) for ever lie
Intomb'd my fear of death! and ev'ry fear,
The dread of ev'ry evil, but thy frown.
  Whom ſee I yonder ſo demurely ſmile?
Laughter a labour, and might break their reſt.
Ye Quietiſts! in homage to the ſkies!
Serene! of ſoft addreſs! who mildly make
An unobtruſive tender of your hearts,
Abhorring violence! who halt indeed,
But, for the bleſſing, wreſtle not with Heav'n!
Think you my ſong too turbulent? too warm?
Are paſſions, then, the pagans of the ſoul?
Reaſon alone baptiz'd? alone ordain'd

To touch things ſacred? Oh for warmer ſtill!
Guilt chills my zeal, and age benumbs my pow'rs:
Oh for an humbler heart and prouder ſong!
Thou, my much-injur'd Theme! with that ſoft eye
Which melted o'er doom'd Salem, deign to look
Compaſſion to the coldneſs of my breaſt,
And pardon to the winter in my ſtrain.
 Oh ye cold-hearted, frozen, Formaliſts!
On ſuch a theme 'tis impious to be calm:
Paſſion is reaſon, tranſport temper, here.
Shall Heav'n, which gave us ardour, and has ſhewn
Her own for man ſo ſtrongly, not diſdain
What ſmooth emollients in theology,
Recumbent Virtue's downy doctors, preach,
That proſe of piety, a lukewarm praiſe?
Riſe odours ſweet from incenſe uninflam'd?
Devotion when lukewarm is undevout;
But when it glows, its heat is ſtruck to heav'n;
To human hearts her golden harps are ſtrung;
High heav'n's orcheſtra chaunts amen to man.
 Hear I, or dream I hear their diſtant ſtrain,
Sweet to the ſoul, and taſting ſtrong of heav'n,
Soft-wafted on celeſtial Pity's plume,
Thro' the vaſt ſpaces of the univerſe,
To cheer me in this melancholy gloom?
Oh when will death (now ſtingleſs) like a friend
Admit me of their choir? Oh when will death
This mould'ring, old, partition-wall throw down?

Give beings, one in nature, one abode?
Oh Death divine! that giv'ſt us to the ſkies:
Great future! glorious patron of the paſt
And preſent! when ſhall I thy ſhrine adore?
From Nature's continent, immenſely wide,
Immenſely bleſt, this little iſle of life,
This dark incarcerating colony
Divides us. Happy day that breaks our chain!
That manumits; that calls from exile home;
That leads to Nature's great metropolis,
And re-admits us, thro' the guardian hand
Of elder brothers, to our Father's throne,
Who hears our Advocate, and, thro' his wounds
Beholding man, allows that tender name.
'Tis this makes Chriſtian triumph a command;
'Tis this makes joy a duty to the wiſe.
'Tis impious in a good man to be ſad.
  Seeſt thou, Lorenzo, where hangs all our hope?
Touch'd by the croſs we live, or more than die;
That touch which touch'd not angels; more divine
Than that which touch'd confuſion into form,
And darkneſs into glory: partial touch!
Ineffably pre-eminent regard!
Sacred to man, and ſov'reign thro' the whole
Long golden chain of miracles, which hangs
From heav'n thro' all duration, and ſupports,
In one illuſtrious and amazing plan,
Thy welfare, Nature! and thy God's renown.

That touch, with charms celeſtial, heals the ſoul
Diſeas'd, drives pain from guilt, lights life in death,
Turns earth to heav'n, to heav'nly thrones transforms
The ghaſtly ruins of the mould'ring tomb.
   Doſt aſk me when? When he who dy'd returns;
Returns, how chang'd! where then the man of woe?
In Glory's terrors all the Godhead burns,
And all his courts, exhauſted by the tide
Of deities triumphant in his train,
Leave a ſtupendous ſolitude in heaven;
Repleniſh'd ſoon, repleniſh'd with increaſe
Of pomp and multitude; a radiant band
Of angels new, of angels from the tomb.
   Is this by fancy thrown remote? and riſe
Dark doubts between the promiſe and event?
I ſend thee not to volumes for thy cure;
Read Nature; Nature is a friend to truth;
Nature is Chriſtian; preaches to mankind,
And bids dead matter aid us in our creed.
Haſt thou ne'er ſeen the comet's flaming flight?
Th' illuſtrious ſtranger paſſing, terror ſheds
On gazing nations from his fiery train,
Of length enormous, takes his ample round
Thro' depths of ether; coaſts unnumber'd worlds
Of more than ſolar glory; doubles wide
Heav'n's mighty cape; and then reviſits earth,
From the long travel of a thouſand years.
Thus at the deſtin'd period ſhall return

He, once on earth, who bids the comet blaze,
And with him all our triumph o'er the tomb.
Nature is dumb on this important point,
Or Hope precarious in low whiſper breathes;
Faith ſpeaks aloud, diſtinct; ev'n adders hear,
But turn, and dart into the dark again.
Faith builds a bridge acroſs the gulf of death,
To break the ſhock blind Nature cannot ſhun,
And lands Thought ſmoothly on the farther ſhore.
Death's terror is the mountain faith removes,
That mountain-barrier between man and peace.
'Tis faith diſarms Deſtruction, and abſolves
From ev'ry clam'rous charge the guiltleſs tomb.
Why diſbelieve? Lorenzo!—"Reaſon bids,
"All-ſacred Reaſon."—Hold her ſacred ſtill;
Nor ſhalt thou want a rival in thy flame:
All-ſacred Reaſon! ſource and ſoul of all
Demanding praiſe on earth, or earth above!
My heart is thine: deep in its inmoſt folds
Live thou with life; live dearer of the two.
Wear I the bleſſed croſs, by Fortune ſtamp'd
On paſſive Nature before Thought was born?
My birth's blind bigot! fir'd with local zeal!
No; Reaſon rebaptiz'd me when adult;
Weigh'd true and falſe in her impartial ſcale;
My heart became the convert of my head,
And made that choice which once was but my fate.
"On argument alone my faith is built."

Reaſon purſu'd is faith; and unpurſu'd,
Where proof invites, 'tis reaſon then no more:
And ſuch our proof, that or our faith is right,
Or Reaſon lies, and Heav'n deſign'd it wrong.
Abſolve we this? what then is blaſphemy?
  Fond as we are, and juſtly fond of faith,
Reaſon, we grant, demands our firſt regard;
The mother honour'd, as the daughter dear.
Reaſon the root, fair Faith is but the flower:
The fading flow'r ſhall die, but Reaſon lives
Immortal, as her Father in the ſkies.
When faith is virtue, reaſon makes it ſo.
Wrong not the Chriſtian; think not reaſon your's;
'Tis reaſon our great Maſter holds ſo dear;
'Tis reaſon's injur'd rights his wrath reſents;
'Tis Reaſon's voice obey'd his glories crown:
To give loſt reaſon life he pour'd his own.
Believe, and ſhew the reaſon of a man;
Believe, and taſte the pleaſure of a god;
Believe, and look with triumph on the tomb.
Thro' reaſon's wounds alone thy faith can die,
Which dying, tenfold terror gives to Death,
And dips in venom his twice-mortal ſting.
  Learn hence what honours, what loud pæans, due
To thoſe who puſh our antidote aſide;
Thoſe boaſted friends to reaſon and to man,
Whoſe fatal love ſtabs ev'ry joy, and leaves
Death's terror heighten'd, gnawing on his heart.

Theſe pompous ſons of reaſon idoliz'd,
And vilify'd at once; of reaſon dead,
Then deify'd, as monarchs were of old;
What conduct plants proud laurels on their brow?
While love of truth thro' all their camp reſounds,
They draw Pride's curtain o'er the noon-tide ray,
Spike up their inch of reaſon on the point
Of philoſophic wit, call'd Argument,
And then exulting in their taper, cry,
"Behold the ſun;" and, Indian-like, adore.
  Talk they of morals? O thou bleeding Love!
Thou Maker of new morals to mankind!
The grand morality is love of thee.
As wiſe as Socrates, if ſuch they were,
(Nor will they bate of that ſublime renown)
As wiſe as Socrates might juſtly ſtand
The definition of a modern fool.
  A Chriſtian is the higheſt ſtyle of man.
And is there who the bleſſed croſs wipes off,
As a foul blot, from his diſhonour'd brow?
If angels tremble, 'tis at ſuch a ſight:
The wretch they quit, deſponding of their charge,
Moſt ſtruck with grief or wonder who can tell?
  Ye ſold to ſenſe! ye Citizens of earth!
(For ſuch alone the Chriſtian banner fly)
Know ye how wiſe your choice, how great your gain?
Behold the picture of earth's happieſt man:
"He calls his wiſh, it comes; he ſends it back,

"And ſays he call'd another; that arrives,
"Meets the ſame welcome; yet he ſtill calls on;
"Till one calls him, who varies not his call,
"But holds him faſt, in chains of darkneſs bound,
"Till Nature dies, and Judgment ſets him free;
"A freedom far leſs welcome than his chain."
But grant man happy; grant him happy long;
Add to life's higheſt prize her lateſt hour;
That hour, ſo late, is nimble in approach,
That, like a poſt, comes on in full career.
How ſwift the ſhuttle flies that weaves thy ſhroud!
Where is the fable of thy former years?
Thrown down the gulf of time; as far from thee
As they had ne'er been thine: the day in hand,
Like a bird ſtruggling to get looſe, is going;
Scarce now poſſeſs'd, ſo ſuddenly 'tis gone;
And each ſwift moment fled, is death advanc'd
By ſtrides as ſwift. Eternity is all;
And whoſe eternity? who triumphs there?
Bathing for ever in the font of bliſs!
For ever baſking in the Deity!
Lorenzo! who?—thy conſcience ſhall reply.
O give it leave to ſpeak; 'twill ſpeak ere long,
Thy leave unaſk'd. Lorenzo! hear it now,
While uſeful its advice, its accent mild.
By the great edict, the divine decree,
Truth is depoſited with man's laſt hour;
An honeſt hour, and faithful to her truſt;

Truth! eldeſt daughter of the Deity;
Truth! of his council when he made the worlds;
Nor leſs, when he ſhall judge the worlds he made;
Tho' ſilent long, and ſleeping ne'er ſo ſound,
Smother'd with errors, and oppreſs'd with toys,
That heaven-commiſſion'd hour no ſooner calls,
But from her cavern in the ſoul's abyſs,
Like him they fable under Ætna whelm'd,
The goddeſs burſts in thunder and in flame,
Loudly convinces, and ſeverely pains.
Dark dæmons I diſcharge, and hydra-ſtings;
The keen vibration of bright truth—is hell;
Juſt definition! tho' by ſchools untaught.
Ye deaf to truth! peruſe this parſon'd page,
And truſt, for once, a prophet and a prieſt;
"Men may live fools, but fools they cannot die."

End of Night Fourth.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT V.

THE RELAPSE.

Humbly inſcribed to the

RIGHT HON. THE EARL OF LITCHFIELD.

LORENZO! to recriminate is juſt.
Fondneſs for fame is avarice of air.
I grant the man is vain who writes for praiſe.
Praiſe no man e'er deſerv'd, who ſought no more.
  As juſt thy ſecond charge. I grant the Muſe
Has often bluſh'd at her degen'rate ſons,
Retain'd by ſenſe to plead her filthy cauſe,
To raiſe the low, to magnify the mean,
And ſubtilize the groſs into refin'd;
As if to magic numbers' pow'rful charm
'Twas given to make a civet of their ſong
Obſcene, and ſweeten ordure to perfume.
Wit, a true Pagan, deifies the brute,
And lifts our ſwine-enjoyments from the mire.
  The fact notorious, nor obſcure the cauſe.
We wear the chains of pleaſure and of pride:
Theſe ſhare the man, and theſe diſtract him too;
Draw diff'rent ways, and claſh in their commands.

Pride, like an eagle, builds among the ſtars;
But Pleaſure, lark-like, neſts upon the ground.
Joys ſhar'd by brute creation Pride reſents;
Pleaſure embraces: man would both enjoy,
And both at once: a point how hard to gain!
But what can't Wit, when ſtung by ſtrong deſire?
  Wit dares attempt this arduous enterpriſe.
Since joys of ſenſe can't riſe to Reaſon's taſte,
In ſubtle Sophiſtry's laborious forge
Wit hammers out a reaſon new, that ſtoops
To ſordid ſcenes, and meets them with applauſe.
Wit calls the Graces the chaſte zone to looſe,
Nor leſs than a plump god to fill the bowl:
A thouſand phantoms and a thouſand ſpells,
A thouſand opiates ſcatters to delude,
To faſcinate, inebriate, lay aſleep,
And the fool'd mind of man delightfully confound.
Thus that which ſhock'd the judgment ſhocks no more;
That which gave Pride offence no more offends.
Pleaſure and Pride, by nature mortal foes,
At war eternal, which in man ſhall reign,
By Wit's addreſs patch up a fatal peace,
And hand in hand lead on the rank debauch,
From rank refin'd to delicate and gay.
Art, curſed Art! wipes off th' indebted bluſh
From Nature's cheek, and bronzes ev'ry ſhame.
Man ſmiles in vain, glories in his guilt,
And Infamy ſtands candidate for praiſe.

All writ by man in favour of the ſoul,
Theſe ſenſual ethics far, in bulk, tranſcend.
The flow'rs of eloquence, profuſely pour'd
O'er ſpotted Vice, fill half the letter'd world.
Can pow'rs of genius exorciſe their page,
And conſecrate enormities with ſong!
But let not theſe inexpiable ſtrains
Condemn the Muſe that knows her dignity,
Nor meanly ſtops at time, but holds the world
As 'tis, in Nature's ample field, a point,
A point in her eſteem, from whence to ſtart,
And run the round of univerſal ſpace,
To viſit being univerſal there,
And being's Source, that utmoſt flight of mind!
Yet ſpite of this ſo vaſt circumference,
Well knows but what is moral nought is great.
Sing Syrens only? do not angels ſing?
There is in Poeſy a decent pride,
Which well becomes her when ſhe ſpeaks to Proſe,
Her younger ſiſter, happly not more wiſe.
Think'ſt thou, Lorenzo! to find paſtimes here?
No guilty paſſion blown into a flame,
No foible flatter'd, dignity diſgrac'd,
No fairy field of fiction, all on flow'r,
No rainbow colours here, or ſilken tale;
But ſolemn counſels, images of awe,
Truths which Eternity lets fall on man,
With double weight, thro' theſe revolving ſpheres,

This death-deep ſilence, and incumbent ſhade:
Thoughts ſuch as ſhall reviſit your laſt hour,
Viſit uncall'd, and live when life expires;
And thy dark pencil, Midnight! darker ſtill
In melancholy dipp'd, imbrowns the whole.
  Yet this, even this, my laughter-loving Friends!
Lorenzo! and thy brothers of the ſmile!
If what imports you moſt can moſt engage,
Shall ſteal your ear, and chain you to my ſong.
Or if you fail me, know the wiſe ſhall taſte
The truths I ſing; the truths I ſing ſhall feel;
And, feeling, give aſſent; and their aſſent
Is ample recompenſe; is more than praiſe.
But chiefly thine, O Litchfield! nor miſtake;
Think not unintroduc'd I force my way:
Narciſſa, not unknown, not unally'd
By virtue, or by blood, illuſtrious Youth!
To thee, from blooming amaranthine bow'rs,
Where all the language harmony, deſcends
Uncall'd, and aſks admittance for the Muſe;
A Muſe that will not pain thee with thy praiſe:
Thy praiſe ſhe drops, by nobler ſtill inſpir'd.
  O thou, bleſs'd Spirit! whether the ſupreme,
Great antemundane Father! in whoſe breaſt
Embryo creation, unborn being, dwelt,
And all its various revolutions roll'd
Preſent, tho' future, prior to themſelves;
Whoſe breath can blow it into nought again,

Or from his throne ſome delegated pow'r,
Who, ſtudious of our peace, doſt turn the thought
From vain and vile to ſolid and ſublime!
Unſeen thou lead'ſt me to delicious draughts
Of inſpiration, from a purer ſtream,
And fuller of the God, than that which burſt
From fam'd Caſtalia; nor is yet allay'd
My ſacred thirſt, tho' long my ſoul has rang'd
Thro' pleaſing paths of moral and divine,
By thee ſuſtain'd, and lighted by the ſtars.
  By them beſt lighted are the paths of thought;
Nights are their days, their moſt-illumin'd hours.
By day the ſoul, o'erborne by life's career,
Stunn'd by the din, and giddy with the glare,
Reels far from reaſon, joſtled by the throng.
By day the ſoul is paſſive, all her thoughts
Impos'd, precarious, broken, ere mature.
By night, from objects free, from paſſion cool,
Thoughts uncontroll'd, and unimpreſs'd, the births
Of pure election, arbitrary range,
Not to the limits of one world confin'd,
But from ethereal travels light on earth,
As voyagers drop anchor for repoſe.
  Let Indians, and the gay, like Indians, fond
Of feather'd fopperies, the ſun adore;
Darkneſs has more divinity for me;
It ſtrikes thought inward; it drives back the ſoul
To ſettle on herſelf, our point ſupreme!

There lies our theatre; there ſits our judge.
Darkneſs the curtain drops o'er life's dull ſcene;
'Tis the kind hand of Providence ſtretch'd out
'Twixt man and vanity; 'tis Reaſon's reign,
And Virtue's too; theſe tutelary ſhades
Are man's aſylum from the tainted throng.
Night is the good man's friend, and guardian too;
It no leſs reſcues virtue than inſpires.
Virtue, for ever frail as fair, below,
Her tender nature ſuffers in the crowd,
Nor touches on the world without a ſtain.
The world's infections; few bring back at eve,
Immaculate, the manners of the morn.
Something we thought is blotted; we reſolv'd
Is ſhaken; we renounc'd returns again.
Each ſalutation may ſlide in a ſin
Unthought before, or fix a former flaw.
Nor is it ſtrange; light, motion, concourſe, noiſe,
All ſcatter us abroad. Thought, outward-bound,
Neglectful of our home-affairs, flies off
In fume and diſſipation, quits her charge,
And leaves the breaſt unguarded to the foe.
Preſent example gets within our guard,
And acts with double force, by few repell'd.
Ambition fires ambition; love of gain
Strikes, like a peſtilence, from breaſt to breaſt:
Riot, pride, perfidy, blue vapours, breathe
And inhumanity is caught from man,

From ſmiling man! A ſlight, a ſingle glance,
And ſhot at random, often has brought home
A ſudden fever to the throbbing heart
Of envy, rancour, or impure deſire.
We ſee, we hear, with peril; Safety dwells
Remote from multitude. The world's a ſchool
Of wrong, and what proficients ſwarm around!
We muſt or imitate or diſapprove;
Muſt liſt as their accomplices or foes:
That ſtains our innocence, this wounds our peace.
From Nature's birth, hence, Wiſdom has been ſmit
With ſweet receſs, and languiſh'd for the ſhade.
This ſacred ſhade and ſolitude what is it?
'Tis the felt preſence of the Deity.
Few are the faults we flatter when alone;
Vice ſinks in her allurements, is ungilt,
And looks, like other objects, black by night.
By night an Atheiſt half-believes a God.
Night is fair Virtue's immemorial friend.
The conſcious moon, thro' ev'ry diſtant age,
Has held a lamp to Wiſdom, and let fall,
On Contemplation's eye, her purging ray.
The fam'd Athenian, he who woo'd from heav'n
Philoſophy the fair, to dwell with men,
And form their manners, not inflame their pride,
While o'er his head, as fearful to moleſt
His lab'ring mind, the ſtars in ſilence ſlide,
And ſeem all gazing on their future gueſt,

See him ſoliciting his ardent ſuit
In private audience: all the live-long night,
Rigid in thought, and motionleſs, he ſtands,
Nor quits his theme or poſture till the ſun
(Rude drunkard! riſing roſy from the main)
Diſturbs his nobler intellectual beam,
And gives him to the tumult of the world.
Hail, precious Moments! ſtol'n from the black waſte
Of murder'd time! auſpicious Midnight! hail!
The world excluded, every paſſion huſh'd,
And open'd a calm intercourſe with Heav'n,
Here the ſoul ſits in council, ponders paſt,
Predeſtines future action; ſees, not feels,
Tumultuous life, and reaſons with the ſtorm,
All her lies anſwers, and thinks down her charms.
What awful joy! what mental liberty!
I am not pent in darkneſs; rather ſay
(If not too blold) in darkneſs I'm imbow'r'd.
Delightful gloom! the cluſt'ring thoughts around
Spontaneous riſe, and bloſſom in the ſhade,
But droop by day, and ſicken in the ſun.
Thought borrows light elſewhere; from that firſt fire,
Fountain of animation! whence deſcends
Urania, my celeſtial gueſt! who deigns
Nightly to viſit me, ſo mean; and now,
Conſcious how needful diſcipline to man,
From pleaſing dalliance with the charms of night,
My wand'ring thought recalls, to what excites

Far other beat of heart, Narciſſa's tomb.
Or is it feeble Nature calls me back,
And breaks my ſpirit into grief again?
Is it a Stygian vapour in my blood?
A cold ſlow puddle creeping thro' my veins?
Or is it thus with all men?—Thus with all.
What are we? how unequal! now we ſoar,
And now we ſink. To be the ſame tranſcends
Our preſent prowefs. Dearly pays the ſoul
For lodging ill; too dearly rents her clay.
Reaſon, a baffled counſellor! but adds
The bluſh of weakneſs to the bane of woe.
The nobleſt ſpirit, fighting her hard fate
In this damp, duſky region, charg'd with ſtorms,
But feebly flutters, yet untaught to fly;
Or, flying, ſhort her flight, and ſure her fall:
Our utmoſt ſtrength, when down, to riſe again;
And not to yield, tho' beaten, all our praiſe.
'Tis vain to ſeek in men for more than man.
Tho' proud in promiſe, big in previous thought,
Experience damps our triumph. I, who late
Emerging from the ſhadows of the grave,
Where grief detain'd me pris'ner, mounting high,
Threw wide the gates of everlaſting day,
And call'd mankind to glory, ſhook off pain,
Mortality ſhook off, in ether pure,
And ſtruck the ſtars, now feel my ſpirits fail;
They drop me from the zenith; down I ruſh,

Like him whom fable fledg'd with waxen wings,
In ſorrow drown'd—but not in ſorrow loſt.
How wretched is the man who never mourn'd!
I dive for precious pearl in Sorrow's ſtream:
Not ſo the thoughtleſs man that only grieves,
Takes all the torment, and rejects the gain,
(Ineſtimable gain!) and gives Heav'n leave
To make him but more wretched, not more wiſe.
  If wiſdom is our leſſon (and what elſe
Ennobles man? what elſe have angels learn'd?)
Grief! more proficients in thy ſchool are made,
Than Genius or proud Learning e'er could boaſt.
Voracious Learning, often over-fed,
Digeſts not into ſenſe her motley meal.
This bookcaſe, with dark booty almoſt burſt,
This forager on others' wiſdom, leaves
Her native farm, her reaſon, quite untill'd;
With mix'd manure ſhe ſurfeits the rank ſoil,
Dung'd, but not dreſt, and rich to beggary:
A pomp untameable of weeds prevails:
Her ſervant's wealth incumber'd Wiſdom mourns.
  And what ſays Genius? "Let the dull be wiſe."
Genius, too hard for right, can prove it wrong,
And loves to boaſt, where bluſh men leſs inſpir'd.
It pleads exemption from the laws of ſenſe,
Conſiders reaſon as a leveller,
And ſcorns to ſhare a bleſſing with the crowd.
That wiſe it could be thinks an ample claim;

To glory and to pleasure gives the rest.
Crassus but sleeps, Ardelio is undone.
Wisdom less shudders at a fool than wit.
  But Wisdom smiles, when humbled mortals weep.
When Sorrow wounds the breast, as ploughs the glebe,
And hearts obdurate feel her soft'ning shower;
Her seed celestial, then, glad Wisdom sows;
Her golden harvest triumphs in the soil.
If so, Narcissa! welcome my Relapse;
I'll raise a tax on my calamity,
And reap rich compensation from my pain.
I'll range the plenteous intellectual field,
And gather ev'ry thought of sov'reign power
To chase the moral maladies of man;
Thoughts which may bear transplanting to the skies,
Tho' natives of this coarse penurious soil;
Nor wholly wither there where seraphs sing,
Refin'd, exalted, not annull'd, in heav'n:
Reason, the sun that gives them birth, the same
In either clime, tho' more illustrious there.
These choicely cull'd, and elegantly rang'd,
Shall form a garland for Narcissa's tomb,
And, peradventure, of no fading flow'rs.
  Say, on what themes shall puzzled choice descend?
"The importance of contemplating the tomb;
"Why men decline it; suicide's foul birth;
"The various kinds of grief; the faults of age;
"And death's dread character—invite my song."

And, firſt, the importance of our end ſurvey'd.
Friends counſel quick diſmiſſion of our grief.
Miſtaken kindneſs! our hearts heal too ſoon.
Are they more kind than He who ſtruck the blow?
Who bid it do his errand in our hearts,
And baniſh peace till nobler gueſts arrive,
And bring it back a true and endleſs peace?
Calamities are friends: as glaring day
Of theſe unnumber'd luſtres robs our ſight,
Proſperity puts out unnumber'd thoughts
Of import high, and light divine to man.
The man how bleſs'd who, ſick of gaudy ſcenes,
(Scenes apt to thruſt between us and ourſelves!)
Is led by choice to take his fav'rite walk
Beneath Death's gloomy, ſilent, cypreſs ſhades,
Unpierc'd by Vanity's fantaſtic ray;
To read his monuments, to weigh his duſt,
Viſit his vaults, and dwell among the tombs!
Lorenzo! read with me Narciſſa's ſtone;
(Narciſſa was thy fav'rite) let us read
Her moral ſtone; few doctors preach ſo well;
Few orators ſo tenderly can touch
The feeling heart. What pathos in the date!
Apt words can ſtrike; and yet in them we ſee
Faint images of what we here enjoy.
What cauſe have we to build on length of life?
Temptations ſeize, when fear is laid aſleep,
And ill foreboded is our ſtrongeſt guard.

See from her tomb, as from an humble ſhrine,
Truth, radiant goddeſs! ſallies on my ſoul,
And puts Deluſion's duſky train to flight;
Diſpels the miſt our ſultry paſſions raiſe,
From objects low, terreſtrial, and obſcene,
And ſhews the real eſtimate of things,
Which no man, unafflicted, ever ſaw;
Pulls off the veil from Virtue's riſing charms;
Detects temptation in a thouſand lies.
Truth bids me look on men as autumn leaves,
And all they bleed for as the ſummer's duſt
Driv'n by the whirlwind: lighted by her beams,
I widen my horizon, gain new powers,
See things inviſible, feel things remote,
Am preſent with futurities; think nought
To man ſo foreign as the joys poſſeſs'd,
Nought ſo much his as thoſe beyond the grave.
No folly keeps its colour in her ſight;
Pale worldly Wiſdom loſes all her charms.
In pompous promiſe from her ſchemes profound,
If future fate ſhe plans, 'tis all in leaves,
Like Sybil, unſubſtantial, fleeting bliſs!
At the firſt blaſt it vaniſhes in air.
Not ſo celeſtial. Wouldſt thou know, Lorenzo!
How differ worldly wiſdom and divine?
Juſt as the waning and the waxing moon.
More empty worldly wiſdom ev'ry day,
And ev'ry day more fair her rival ſhines.

When later, there's leſs time to play the fool.
Soon our whole term for wiſdom is expir'd,
(Thou know'ſt ſhe calls no council in the grave)
And everlaſting fool is writ in fire,
Or real wiſdom wafts us to the ſkies.
As worldly ſchemes reſemble Sybils' leaves,
The good man's days to Sybils' books compare,
(In ancient ſtory read, thou know'ſt the tale)
In price ſtill riſing as in number leſs,
Ineſtimable quite his final hour.
For that who thrones can offer, offer thrones;
Inſolvent worlds the purchaſe cannot pay.
"Oh let me die his death!" all Nature cries.
"Then live his life."—All Nature falters there;
Our great phyſician daily to conſult,
To commune with the grave our only cure.
What grave preſcribes the beſt?—A friend's; and [yet
From a friend's grave how ſoon we diſengage!
Ev'n to the deareſt, as his marble, cold.
Why are friends raviſh'd from us? 'tis to bind,
By ſoft Affection's ties, on human hearts
The thought of death, which reaſon, too ſupine,
Or miſemploy'd, ſo rarely faſtens there.
Nor reaſon nor affection, no, nor both
Combin'd, can break the witchcrafts of the world.
Behold th' inexorable hour at hand!
Behold th' inexorable hour forgot!
And to forget it the chief aim of life,

Tho' well to ponder it is life's chief end.
  Is death, that ever-threat'ning, ne'er remote,
That all-important, and that only ſure,
(Come when he will) an unexpected gueſt?
Nay, tho' invited by the loudeſt calls
Of blind Imprudence, unexpected ſtill,
Tho' num'rous meſſengers are ſent before,
To warn his great arrival? What the cauſe,
The wondrous cauſe, of this myſterious ill?
All heav'n looks down aſtoniſh'd at the ſight.
  Is it that Life has ſown her joys ſo thick,
We can't thruſt in a ſingle care between?
Is it that Life has ſuch a ſwarm of cares,
The thought of death can't enter for the throng?
Is it that Time ſteals on with downy feet,
Nor wakes Indulgence from her golden dream?
To-day is ſo like yeſterday, it cheats;
We take the lying ſiſter for the ſame.
Life glides away, Lorenzo! like a brook,
For ever changing, unperceiv'd the change.
In the ſame brook none ever bath'd him twice;
To the ſame life none ever twice awoke.
We call the brook the ſame; the ſame we think
Our life, tho' ſtill more rapid in its flow,
Nor mark the much irrevocably laps'd,
And mingled with the ſea. Or ſhall we ſay
(Retaining ſtill the brook to bear us on)
That life is like a veſſel on the ſtream?

In life embark'd, we ſmoothly down the tide
Of time deſcend, but not on time intent;
Amus'd, unconſcious of the gliding wave,
Till on a ſudden we perceive a ſhock;
We ſtart, awake, look out: what ſee we there?
Our brittle bark is burſt on Charon's ſhore.
  Is this the cauſe death flies all human thought?
Or is it judgment, by the Will ſtruck blind,
That domineering miſtreſs of the ſoul!
Like him ſo ſtrong by Dalilah the fair?
Or is it fear turns ſtartled Reaſon back,
From looking down a precipice ſo ſteep?
'Tis dreadful, and the dread is wiſely plac'd
By Nature, conſcious of the make of man.
A dreadful friend it is, a terror kind,
A flaming ſword to guard the tree of Life.
By that unaw'd, in life's moſt ſmiling hour
The good man would repine; would ſuffer joys,
And burn impatient for his promis'd ſkies.
The bad, on each punctilious pique of pride,
Or gloom of humour, would give rage the rein,
Bound o'er the barrier, ruſh into the dark,
And mar the ſcenes of Providence below.
  What groan was that, Lorenzo?—Furies! riſe,
And drown, in your leſs execrable yell,
Britannia's ſhame. There took her gloomy flight,
On wing impetuous, a black ſullen ſoul,
Blaſted from hell, with horrid luſt of death.

Thy friend, the brave, the gallant Altamont,
So call'd, ſo thought—and then he fled the field,
Leſs baſe the fear of death than fear of life.
O Britain! infamous for ſuicide!
An iſland in thy manners! far disjoin'd
From the whole world of rationals beſide!
In ambient waves plunge thy polluted head,
Waſh the dire ſtain, nor ſhock the continent.
  But thou be ſhock'd while I detect the cauſe
Of ſelf-aſſault, expoſe the monſter's birth,
And bid Abhorrence hiſs it round the world.
Blame not thy clime, nor chide the diſtant ſun;
The ſun is innocent, thy clime abſolv'd.
Immoral climes kind Nature never made.
The cauſe I ſing in Eden might prevail,
And proves it is thy folly, not thy fate.
  The ſoul of man, (let man in homage bow
Who names his ſoul) a native of the ſkies!
High-born and free, her freedom ſhould maintain,
Unfold, unmortgag'd for earth's little bribes.
Th' illuſtrious ſtranger, in this foreign land,
Like ſtrangers, jealous of her dignity,
Studious of home, and ardent to return,
Of earth ſuſpicious, earth's inchanted cup
With cool reſerve light touching, ſhould indulge,
On immortality, her godlike taſte;
There take large draughts: make her chief banquet
  But ſome reject this ſuſtenance divine, [there.

To beggarly vile appetites defcend,
Afk alms of earth for guefts that came from heav'n!
Sink into flaves, and fell, for prefent hire,
Their rich reverfion, and (what fhares its fate)
Their native freedom, to the prince who fways
This nether world: and when his payments fail,
When his foul bafket gorges them no more,
Or their pall'd palates loath the bafket full,
Are inftantly, with wild demoniac rage,
For breaking all the chains of Providence,
And burfting their confinement, tho' faft barr'd
By laws divine and human, guarded ftrong
With horrors doubled to defend the pafs,
The blackeft Nature or dire guilt can raife,
And moated round with fathomlefs deftruction,
Sure to receive and whelm them in their fall.
  Such, Britons! is the caufe, to you unknown,
Or, worfe, o'erlook'd, o'erlook'd by magiftrates,
Thus criminals themfelves. I grant the deed
Is madnefs, but the madnefs of the heart.
And what is that? our utmoft bound of guilt.
A fenfual unreflecting life is big
With monftrous births, and fuicide, to crown
The black infernal brood. The bold to break
Heav'n's law fupreme, and defperately rufh
Thro' facred Nature's murder, on their own,
Becaufe they never think of death, they die.
'Tis equally man's duty, glory, gain,

At once to ſhun and meditate his end.
When by the bed of languiſhment we ſit,
(The ſeat of Wiſdom! if our choice, not fate)
Or o'er our dying friends in anguiſh hang,
Wipe the cold dew, or ſtay the ſinking head,
Number their moments, and in ev'ry clock
Start at the voice of an eternity;
See the dim lamp of life juſt feebly lift
An agonizing beam, at us to gaze,
Then ſink again, and quiver into death,
That moſt pathetic herald of our own,
How read we ſuch ſad ſcenes? As ſent to man
In perfect vengeance? no; in pity ſent,
To melt him down, like wax, and then impreſs,
Indelible, Death's image on his heart,
Bleeding for others, trembling for himſelf.
We bleed, we tremble, we forget, we ſmile.
The mind turns fool before the cheek is dry.
Our quick-returning folly cancels all,
As the tide ruſhing razes what is writ
In yielding ſands, and ſmooths the letter'd ſhore.
  Lorenzo! haſt thou ever weigh'd a ſigh?
Or ſtudy'd the philoſophy of tears?
(A ſcience yet unlectur'd in our ſchools!)
Haſt thou deſcended deep into the breaſt,
And ſeen their ſource? if not, deſcend with me,
And trace theſe briny riv'lets to their ſprings.
  Our fun'ral tears from diff'rent cauſes riſe:

As if from ſep'rate ciſterns in the ſoul,
Of various kinds they flow. From tender hearts,
By ſoft contagion call'd, ſome burſt at once,
And ſtream obſequious to the leading eye:
Some aſk more time, by curious art diſtill'd.
Some hearts, in ſecret hard, unapt to melt,
Struck by the magic of the public eye,
Like Moſes' ſmitten rock, guſh out amain:
Some weep to ſhare the fame of the deceas'd,
So high in merit, and to them ſo dear:
They dwell on praiſes which they think they ſhare,
And thus, without a bluſh, commend themſelves.
Some mourn in proof that ſomething they could love;
They weep not to relieve their grief, but ſhew.
Some weep in perfect juſtice to the dead,
As conſcious all their love is in arrear.
Some miſchievouſly weep, not unappris'd.
Tears ſometimes aid the conqueſt of an eye.
With what addreſs the ſoft Epheſians draw
Their ſable network o'er entangled hearts?
As ſeen thro' cryſtal, how their roſes glow,
While liquid pearl runs trickling down their cheek?
Of her's not prouder Egypt's wanton queen,
Carouſing gems, herſelf diſſolv'd in love.
Some weep at death, abſtracted from the dead,
And celebrate, like Charles, their own deceaſe.
By kind conſtruction ſome are deem'd to weep,
Becauſe a decent veil conceals their joy.

Some weep in earneſt, and yet weep in vain,
As deep in indiſcretion as in woe.
Paſſion, blind paſſion! impotently pours
Tears that deſerve more tears, while Reaſon ſleeps,
Or gazes, like an idiot, unconcern'd,
Nor comprehends the meaning of the ſtorm;
Knows not it ſpeaks to her, and her alone.
Irrationals all ſorrow are beneath,
That noble gift! that privilege of man!
From ſorrow's pang, the birth of endleſs joy:
But theſe are barren of that birth divine;
They weep impetuous as the ſummer-ſtorm,
And full as ſhort! the cruel grief ſoon tam'd,
They make a paſtime of the ſtingleſs tale;
Far as the deep-reſounding knell they ſpread
The dreadful news, and hardly feel it more:
No grain of wiſdom pays them for their woe.
Half-round the globe the tears pump'd up by death
Are ſpent in wat'ring vanities of life;
In making folly flouriſh ſtill more fair.
When the ſick ſoul, her wonted ſtay withdrawn,
Reclines on earth, and ſorrows in the duſt,
Inſtead of learning there her true ſupport,
Tho' there thrown down her true ſupport to learn,
Without Heav'n's aid, impatient to be bleſt,
She crawls to the next ſhrub or bramble vile,
Tho' from the ſtately cedar's arms ſhe fell;
With ſtale foreſworn embraces clings anew,

The ſtranger weds, and bloſſoms, as before,
In all the fruitleſs fopperies of life,
Preſents her weed, well-fancy'd, at the ball,
And raffles for the death's-head on the ring.
So wept Aurelia, till the deſtin'd youth
Stept in with his receipt for making ſmiles,
And blanching ſables into bridal bloom.
So wept Lorenzo fair Clariſſa's fate,
Who gave that angel-boy on whom he dotes,
And dy'd to give him, orphan'd in his birth!
Not ſuch, Narciſſa! my diſtreſs for thee.
I'll make an altar of thy ſacred tomb,
To ſacrifice to Wiſdom.—What waſt thou?
"Young, gay, and fortunate!" Each yields a theme:
I'll dwell on each, to ſhun thought more ſevere;
(Heav'n knows I labour with ſeverer ſtill!)
I'll dwell on each, and quite exhauſt thy death.
A ſoul without reflection, like a pile
Without inhabitant, to ruin runs.
And, firſt, thy youth: what ſays it to gray hairs?
Narciſſa! I'm become thy pupil now.—
Early, bright, tranſient, chaſte, as morning dew,
She ſparkled, was exhal'd, and went to heav'n.
Time on this head has ſnow'd, yet ſtill 'tis borne,
Aloft, nor thinks but on another's grave.
Cover'd with ſhame I ſpeak it, age ſevere
Old worn-out vice ſets down for virtue fair;
With graceleſs gravity chaſtiſing youth,

That youth chaſtis'd ſurpaſſing in a fault,
Father of all, forgetfulneſs of death;
As if, like objects preſſing on the ſight,
Death had advanc'd too near us to be ſeen;
Or that life's loan time ripen'd into right,
And men might plead preſcription from the grave,
Deathleſs, from repetition of reprieve.
Deathleſs? far from it! ſuch are dead already;
Their hearts are bury'd, and the world their grave.
  Tell me, ſome God! my guardian Angel! tell
What thus infatuates? what inchantment plants
The phantom of an age 'twixt us and Death,
Already at the door? He knocks; we hear him,
And yet we will not hear. What mail defends
Our untouch'd hearts? what miracle turns off
The pointed thought, which from a thouſand quivers
Is daily darted, and is daily ſhunn'd?
We ſtand, as in a battle, throngs on throngs
Around us falling, wounded oft' ourſelves,
Tho' bleeding with our wounds, immortal ſtill!
We ſee Time's furrows on another's brow,
And Death intrench'd, preparing his aſſault:
How few themſelves in that juſt mirror ſee!
Or, ſeeing, draw their inference as ſtrong!
There death is certain; doubtful here: he muſt,
And ſoon: we may, within an age, expire.
Tho' gray our heads, our thoughts and aims are green;
Like damag'd clocks, whoſe hand and bell diſſent;

Folly sings six, while Nature points at twelve.
Absurd Longevity! More, more, it cries:
More life, more wealth, more trash of ev'ry kind.
And wherefore mad for more, when relish fails?
Object and appetite must club for joy:
Shall Folly labour hard to mend the bow,
Bawbles, I mean, that strike us from without,
While Nature is relaxing ev'ry string!
Ask Thought for joy; grow rich, and hoard within.
Think you the soul, when this life's rattles cease,
Has nothing of more manly to succeed?
Contract the taste immortal; learn ev'n now
To relish what alone subsists hereafter.
Divine, or none, henceforth, your joys for ever.
Of age the glory is to wish to die:
That wish is praise and promise; it applauds
Past life, and promises our future bliss.
What weakness see not children in their sires!
Grand-climacterical absurdities!
Gray-hair'd authority, to faults of youth
How shocking! it makes folly thrice a fool,
And our first childhood might our last despise.
Peace and esteem is all that age can hope:
Nothing but wisdom gives the first; the last
Nothing but the repute of being wise.
Folly bars both: our age is quite undone.
What folly can be ranker? like our shadows,
Our wishes lengthen as our sun declines.

No wiſh ſhould loiter, then, this ſide the grave.
Our hearts ſhould leave the world before the knell
Calls for our carcaſſes to mend the ſoil.
Enough to live in tempeſt; die in port:
Age ſhould fly concourſe, cover in retreat
Defects of judgment, and the will's ſubdue;
Walk thoughtful on the ſilent ſolemn ſhore
Of that vaſt ocean it muſt ſail ſo ſoon,
And put good works on board, and wait the wind
That ſhortly blows us into worlds unknown:
If unconſider'd, too, a dreadful ſcene!

All ſhould be prophets to themſelves; foreſee
Their future fate; their future fate foretaſte:
This art would waſte the bitterneſs of death.
The thought of death alone the fear deſtroys:
A diſaffection to that precious thought
Is more than midnight darkneſs on the ſoul,
Which ſleeps beneath it on a precipice,
Puff'd off by the firſt blaſt, and loſt for ever.

Doſt aſk, Lorenzo, why ſo warmly preſt,
By repetition hammer'd on thine ear,
The thought of death? That thought is the machine,
The grand machine! that heaves us from the duſt,
And rears us into men. That thought, ply'd home,
Will ſoon reduce the ghaſtly precipice
O'erhanging hell, will ſoften the deſcent,
And gently ſlope our paſſage to the grave.
How warmly to be wiſh'd! what heart of fleſh

Would trifle with tremendous? dare extremes?
Yawn o'er the fate of infinite? what hand,
Beyond the blackeſt brand of cenſure bold,
(To ſpeak a language too well known to thee)
Would at a moment give its all to Chance,
And ſtamp the dye for an eternity?
  Aid me, Narciſſa! aid me to keep pace
With Deſtiny, and, ere her ſciſſars cut
My thread of life, to break this tougher thread
Of moral death, that ties me to the world.
Sting thou my ſlumb'ring reaſon to ſend forth
A thought of obſervation on the foe;
To ſally, and ſurvey the rapid march
Of his ten thouſand meſſengers to man,
Who, Jehu-like, behind him turns them all.
All accident apart, by Nature ſign'd,
My warrant is gone out, tho' dormant yet;
Perhaps behind one moment lurks my fate.
  Muſt I then forward only look for Death?
Backward I turn mine eye, and find him there.
Man is a ſelf-ſurvivor ev'ry year.
Man, like a ſtream, is in perpetual flow.
Death's a deſtroyer of quotidian prey:
My youth, my noon-tide his; my yeſterday:
The bold invader ſhares the preſent hour.
Each moment on the former ſhuts the grave.
While man is growing, life is in decreaſe,
And cradles rock us nearer to the tomb.

Our birth is nothing but our death begun,
As tapers waſte that inſtant they take fire.
Shall we then fear leſt that ſhould come to paſs
Which comes to paſs each moment of our lives?
If fear we muſt, let that death turn us pale
Which murders ſtrength and ardour; what remains
Should rather call on Death than dread his call.
Ye partners of my fault, and my decline!
Thoughtleſs of death, but when your neighbour's knell
(Rude viſitant!) knocks hard at your dull ſenſe,
And with its thunder ſcarce obtains your ear!
Be death your theme in ev'ry place and hour;
Nor longer want, ye monumental Sires!
A brother tomb to tell you you ſhall die.
That death you dread (ſo great is Nature's ſkill!)
Know you ſhall court before you ſhall enjoy.
But you are learn'd; in volumes deep you ſit,
In wiſdom ſhallow. Pompous ignorance!
Would you be ſtill more learned than the learn'd?
Learn well to know how much need not be known,
And what that knowledge which impairs your ſenſe.
Our needful knowledge, like our needful food,
Unhedg'd, lies open in life's common field,
And bids all welcome to the vital feaſt.
You ſcorn what lies before you in the page
Of Nature and Experience, moral truth;
Of indiſpenſable, eternal fruit,
Fruit on which mortals feeding turn to gods;

And dive in ſcience for diſtinguiſh'd names,
Diſhoneſt fomentation of your pride,
Sinking in virtue as you riſe in fame.
Your learning, like the lunar beam, affords
Light, but not heat; it leaves you undevout,
Frozen at heart, while ſpeculation ſhines.
Awake, ye curious Indagators! fond
Of knowing all but what avails you known.
If you would learn Death's character, attend.
All caſts of conduct, all degrees of health,
All dyes of fortune, and all dates of age,
Together ſhook in his impartial urn,
Come forth at random; or, if choice is made,
The choice is quite ſarcaſtic, and inſults
All bold conjecture and fond hopes of man.
What countleſs multitudes not only leave,
But deeply diſappoint us, by their deaths!
Tho' great our ſorrow, greater our ſurpriſe.
Like other tyrants, Death delights to ſmite
What, ſmitten, moſt proclaims the pride of pow'r
And arbitrary nod. His joy ſupreme
To bid the wretch ſurvive the fortunate;
The feeble wrap th' athletic in his ſhroud;
And weeping fathers build their children's tomb:
Me thine, Narciſſa!—What tho' ſhort thy date?
Virtue, not rolling ſuns, the mind matures.
That life is long which anſwers life's great end.
The time that bears no fruit deſerves no name.

The man of wiſdom is the man of years.
In hoary youth Methuſalems may die;
O how miſdated on their flatt'ring tombs!
  Narciſſa's youth has lectur'd me thus far:
And can her gaiety give counſel too?
That, like the Jews' fam'd oracle of gems,
Sparkles inſtruction; ſuch as throws new light,
And opens more the character of Death,
Ill known to thee, Lorenzo! this thy vaunt!
" Give Death his due, the wretched and the old;
" Ev'n let him ſweep his rubbiſh to the grave;
" Let him not violate kind Nature's laws,
" But own man born to live as well as die."
Wretched and old thou giv'ſt him; young and gay
He takes; and plunder is a tyrant's joy.
What if I prove, "the fartheſt from the fear
" Are often neareſt to the ſtroke of fate?
  All more than common menaces an end.
A blaze betokens brevity of life.
As if bright embers ſhould emit a flame,
Glad ſpirits ſparkled from Narciſſa's eye,
And made Youth younger, and taught Life to live.
As Nature's oppoſites wage endleſs war,
For this offence, as treaſon to the deep
Inviolable ſtupor of his reign,
Where luſt and turbulent ambition ſleep,
Death took ſwift vengeance. As he life deteſts,
More life is ſtill more odious; and, reduc'd

By conqueſt, aggrandizes more his pow'r.
But wherefore aggrandiz'd? By Heav'n's decree
To plant the ſoul on her eternal guard,
In aweful expectation of our end.
Thus runs Death's dread commiſſion; "Strike, but ſo
" As moſt alarms the living by the dead."
Hence ſtratagem delights him, and ſurpriſe,
And cruel ſport with man's ſecurities.
Not ſimple conqueſt, triumph is his aim;
And where leaſt fear'd, there conqueſt triumphs moſt.
This proves my bold aſſertion not too bold.
  What are his arts to lay our fears aſleep?
Tiberian arts his purpoſes wrap up
In deep Diſſimulation's darkeſt night.
Like princes unconfeſs'd in foreign courts,
Who travel under cover, Death aſſumes
The name and look of Life, and dwells among us:
He takes all ſhapes that ſerve his black deſigns:
Tho' maſter of a wider empire far
Than that o'er which the Roman Eagle flew,
Like Nero, he's a fiddler, charioteer;
Or drives his phaeton in female guiſe;
Quite unſuſpected, till the wheel beneath
His diſarray'd oblation he devours.
  He moſt affects the forms leaſt like himſelf,
His ſlender ſelf: hence burly corpulence
Is his familiar wear, and ſleek diſguiſe.
Behind the roſy bloom he loves to lurk,

Or ambuſh in a ſmile; or, wanton, dive
In dimples deep; Love's eddies, which draw in
Unwary hearts, and ſink them in deſpair.
Such on Narciſſa's couch he loiter'd long
Unknown, and when detected, ſtill was ſeen
To ſmile: ſuch peace has Innocence in death!
  Moſt happy they! whom leaſt his arts deceive.
One eye on death, and one full fix'd on heav'n,
Becomes a mortal and immortal man.
Long on his wiles a piqu'd and jealous ſpy,
I've ſeen, or dream'd I ſaw, the tyrant dreſs,
Lay by his horrors, and put on his ſmiles.
Say, Muſe! for thou remember'ſt, call it back,
And ſhew Lorenzo the ſurpriſing ſcene;
If 'twas a dream, his genius can explain.
  'Twas in a circle of the gay I ſtood:
Death would have enter'd; Nature puſh'd him back:
Supported by a doctor of renown,
His point he gain'd; then artfully diſmiſs'd
The ſage; for Death deſign'd to be conceal'd:
He gave an old vivacious uſurer
His meagre aſpect, and his naked bones,
In gratitude for plumping up his prey,
A pamper'd ſpendthrift, whoſe fantaſtic air,
Well-faſhion'd figure, and cockaded brow,
He took in change, and underneath the pride,
Of coſtly linen tuck'd his filthy ſhroud.
His crooked bow he ſtraighten'd to a cane,

And bid his deadly ſhafts in Myra's eye.
The dreadful maſquerader, thus equipp'd,
Out-ſallies on adventures. Aſk you where?
Where is he not? For his peculiar haunts
Let this ſuffice; ſure as night follows day,
Death treads in Pleaſure's footſteps round the world,
When Pleaſure treads the paths which Reaſon ſhuns.
When againſt Reaſon Riot ſhuts the door,
And gaiety ſupplies the place of ſenſe,
Then, foremoſt at the banquet and the ball,
Death leads the dance, or ſtamps the deadly dye,
Nor ever fails the midnight bowl to crown.
Gaily carouſing to his gay compeers,
Inly he laughs to ſee them laugh at him,
As abſent far; and when the revel burns,
When Fear is baniſh'd, and triumphant Thought,
Calling for all the joys beneath the moon,
Againſt him turns the key, and bids him ſup
With their progenitors—he drops his maſk,
Frowns out at full; they ſtart, deſpair, expire.
Scarce with more ſudden terror and ſurpriſe,
From his black maſk of nitre, touch'd by fire,
He burſts, expands, roars, blazes, and devours.
And is not this triumphant treachery,
And more than ſimple conqueſt, in the fiend?
And now, Lorenzo, doſt thou wrap thy ſoul
In ſoft ſecurity, becauſe unknown
Which moment is commiſſion'd to deſtroy?

In death's uncertainty thy danger lies.
Is death uncertain? therefore thou be fix'd,
Fix'd as a centinel, all eye, all ear,
All expectation of the coming foe.
Rouſe, ſtand in arms, nor lean againſt thy ſpear,
Leſt Slumber ſteal one moment o'er thy ſoul,
And Fate ſurpriſe thee nodding. Watch, be ſtrong;
Thus give each day the merit and renown
Of dying well, tho' doom'd but once to die:
Nor let life's period, hidden, (as from moſt)
Hide, too, from thee the precious uſe of life.
  Early, not ſudden, was Narciſſa's fate:
Soon, not ſurpriſing, Death his viſit paid:
Her thought went forth to meet him on his way,
Nor Gaiety forgot it was to die.
Tho' Fortune, too, (our third and final theme)
As an accomplice, play'd her gaudy plumes,
And ev'ry glitt'ring gewgaw, on her ſight,
To dazzle and debauch it from its mark.
Death's dreadful advent is the mark of man,
And ev'ry thought that miſſes it is blind.
Fortune with Youth and Gaiety conſpir'd
To weave a triple wreath of happineſs,
(If happineſs on earth) to crown her brow:
And could Death charge thro' ſuch a ſhining ſhield?
  That ſhining ſhield invites the tyrant's ſpear,
As if to damp our elevated aims,
And ſtrongly preach humility to man.

O how portentous is proſperity!
How, comet-like, it threatens while it ſhines!
Few years but yield us proof of Death's ambition,
To cull his victims from the faireſt fold,
And ſheath his ſhafts in all the pride of life.
When flooded with abundance, purpled o'er
With recent honours, bloom'd with ev'ry bliſs,
Set up in oſtentation, made the gaze,
The gaudy centre, of the public eye;
When Fortune, thus, has toſs'd her child in air,
Snatch'd from the covert of an humble ſtate,
How often have I ſeen him dropt at once,
Our morning's envy! and our ev'ning's ſigh!
As if her bounties were the ſignal giv'n,
The flow'ry wreath, to mark the ſacrifice,
And call Death's arrows on the deſtin'd prey.
High Fortune ſeems in cruel league with Fate.
Aſk you for what? to give his war on man
The deeper dread, and more illuſtrious ſpoil;
Thus to keep daring mortals more in awe.
And burns Lorenzo ſtill for the ſublime
Of life? to hang his airy neſt on high,
On the ſlight timber of the topmoſt bough,
Rock'd at each breeze, and menacing a fall?
Granting grim Death at equal diſtance there,
Yet peace begins juſt where ambition ends.
What makes man wretched? happineſs deny'd?
Lorenzo! no; 'tis happineſs diſdain'd:

She comes too meanly dreſs'd to win our ſmile,
And calls herſelf Content, a homely name!
Our flame is tranſport, and content our ſcorn.
Ambition turns, and ſhuts the door againſt her,
And weds a toil, a tempeſt, in her ſtead;
A tempeſt to warm tranſport near of kin.
Unknowing what our mortal ſtate admits,
Life's modeſt joys we ruin while we raiſe,
And all our ecſtaſies are wounds to peace;
Peace, the full portion of mankind below.
  And ſince thy peace is dear, ambitious Youth!
Of fortune fond! as thoughtleſs of thy fate!
As late I drew Death's picture, to ſtir up
Thy wholeſome fears, now, drawn in contraſt, ſee
Gay Fortune's, thy vain hopes to reprimand.
See, high in air the ſportive goddeſs hangs,
Unlocks her caſket, ſpreads her glitt'ring ware,
And calls the giddy winds to puff abroad
Her random bounties o'er the gaping throng.
All ruſh rapacious; friends o'er trodden friends,
Sons o'er their fathers, ſubjects o'er their kings,
Prieſts o'er their gods, and lovers o'er the fair,
(Still more ador'd) to ſnatch the golden ſhow'r.
  Gold glitters moſt where virtue ſhines no more,
As ſtars from abſent ſuns have leave to ſhine.
O what a precious pack of votaries,
Unkennell'd from the priſons and the ſtews,
Pour in, all op'ning in their idol's praiſe!

All, ardent, eye each wafture of her hand,
And, wide-expanding their voracious jaws,
Morſel on morſel ſwallow down unchew'd,
Untaſted, thro' mad appetite for more;
Gorg'd to the throat, yet lean and rav'nous ſtill:
Sagacious all to trace the ſmalleſt game,
And bold to ſeize the greateſt. If (bleſt chance!)
Court-zephyrs ſweetly breathe, they launch, they fly,
O'er juſt, o'er ſacred, all forbidden ground,
Drunk with the burning ſcent of place or pow'r,
Staunch to the foot of Lucre till they die.
  Or if for men you take them, as I mark
Their manners, thou their various fates ſurvey.
With aim miſmeaſur'd, and impetuous ſpeed,
Some, darting, ſtrike their ardent wiſh far off,
Thro' fury to poſſeſs it: ſome ſucceed,
But ſtumble, and let fall the taken prize.
From ſome, by ſudden blaſts, 'tis whirl'd away,
And lodg'd in boſoms that ne'er dream'd of gain.
To ſome it ſticks ſo cloſe, that, when torn off,
Torn is the man, and mortal is the wound.
Some, o'er-enamour'd of their bags, run mad,
Groan under gold, yet weep for want of bread.
Together ſome (unhappy rivals!) ſeize,
And rend abundance into poverty;
Loud croaks the raven of the law, and ſmiles;
Smiles, too, the goddeſs; but ſmiles moſt at thoſe
(Juſt victims of exorbitant deſire!)

Who periſh at their own requeſt, and, whelm'd
Beneath her load of laviſh grapes, expire.
Fortune is famous for her numbers ſlain;
The number ſmall which happineſs can bear.
Tho' various for a while their fates, at laſt
One curſe involves them all: at Death's approach
All read their riches backward into loſs,
And mourn in juſt proportion to their ſtore.
And Death's approach (if orthodox my ſong)
Is haſten'd by the lure of Fortune's ſmiles.
And art thou ſtill a glutton of bright gold?
And art thou ſtill rapacious of thy ruin?
Death loves a ſhining mark, a ſignal blow;
A blow which, while it executes, alarms,
And ſtartles thouſands with a ſignal fall.
As when ſome ſtately growth of oak, or pine,
Which nods aloft, and proudly ſpreads her ſhade,
The ſun's defiance, and the flock's defence,
By the ſtrong ſtrokes of lab'ring hinds ſubdu'd,
Loud groans her laſt, and, ruſhing from her height,
In cumbrous ruin thunders to the ground;
The conſcious foreſt trembles at the ſhock,
And hill, and ſtream, and diſtant dale, reſound.
These high-aim'd darts of Death, and theſe alone,
Should I collect, my quiver would be full;
A quiver which, ſuſpended in mid air,
Or near heav'n's archer, in the zodiac, hung,
(So could it be) ſhould draw the public eye,

The gaze and contemplation of mankind!
A conſtellation awful, yet benign,
To guide the gay thro' life's tempeſtuous wave,
Nor ſuffer them to ſtrike the common rock;
" From greater danger to grow more ſecure,
" And, wrapt in happineſs, forget their fate."
  Lyſander, happy paſt the common lot,
Was warn'd of danger, but too gay to fear.
He woo'd the fair Aſpaſia; ſhe was kind.
In youth, form, fortune, fame, they both were bleſs'd:
All who knew envy'd; yet in envy lov'd:
Can Fancy form more finiſh'd happineſs?
Fix'd was the nuptial hour. Her ſtately dome
Roſe on the ſounding beach. The glittering ſpires
Float in the wave, and break againſt the ſhore;
So break thoſe glitt'ring ſhadows, human joys.
The faithleſs morning ſmil'd: he takes his leave
To re-embrace, in ecſtaſies, at eve:
The riſing ſtorm forbids: the news arrives;
Untold ſhe ſaw it in her ſervant's eye.
She felt it ſeen, (her heart was apt to feel)
And drown'd, without the furious ocean's aid,
In ſuffocating ſorrows ſhares his tomb.
Now round the ſumptuous bridal monument
The guilty billows innocently roar,
And the rough ſailor paſſing, drops a tear.
A tear?—can tears ſuffice?—but not for me.
How vain our efforts! and our arts how vain!

The diſtant train of thought I took, to ſhun,
Has thrown me on my fate.—Theſe dy'd together;
Happy in ruin! undivorc'd by death!
Or ne'er to meet, or ne'er to part, is peace.—
Narciſſa! Pity bleeds at thought of thee;
Yet thou waſt only near me, not myſelf.
Survive myſelf?—that cures all other woe.
Narciſſa lives; Philander is forgot.
O the ſoft commerce! O the tender ties,
Cloſe twiſted with the fibres of the heart!
Which, broken, break them, and drain off the ſoul
Of human joy, and make it pain to live.—
And is it then to live? When ſuch friends part
'Tis the ſurvivor dies.—My Heart! no more.

End of Night Fifth.

THE COMPLAINT.

NIGHT VI.

THE INFIDEL RECLAIMED.

IN TWO PARTS.

Containing the

Nature, Proof, and Importance, of Immortality.

PART I.

Where, among other things,

Glory and Riches are particularly conſidered.

Humbly inſcribed to the

RIGHT HON. HENRY PELHAM,

Firſt Lord Commiſſioner of the Treaſury, and Chancellor of the Exchequer.

PREFACE.

FEW ages have been deeper in diſpute about religion than this. The diſpute about religion, and the practice of it, ſeldom go together. The ſhorter, therefore, the diſpute the better. I think it may be reduced to this ſingle queſtion, Is man immortal, or is he not? If he is not, all our diſputes are mere amuſements, or trials of ſkill. In this caſe, truth, reaſon, religion, which give our diſcourſes ſuch pomp and ſolemnity, are (as will be ſhewn) mere empty ſounds, without any meaning in them: but if man is immortal, it will behove him to be very ſerious about eter-

nal consequences; or, in other words, to be truly religious. And this great fundamental truth, unestablished, or unawakened in the minds of men, is, I conceive, the real source and support of all our infidelity, how remote soever the particular objections advanced may seem to be from it. Sensible appearances affect most men much more than abstract reasonings; and we daily see bodies drop around us, but the soul is invisible. The power which inclination has over the judgment, is greater than can be well conceived by those that have not had an experience of it; and of what numbers is it the sad interest that souls should not survive! The Heathen world confessed that they rather hoped, than firmly believed, immortality! and how many Heathens have we still amongst us! The sacred Page assures us, that life and immortality is brought to light by the Gospel; but by how many is the Gospel rejected or overlooked! From these considerations, and from my being, accidentally, privy to the sentiments of some particular persons, I have been long persuaded that most, if not all our infidels (whatever name they take, and whatever scheme, for argument's sake, and to keep themselves in countenance, they patronize) are supported in their deplorable error by some doubt of their immortality at the bottom: and I am satisfied, that men once thoroughly convinced of their immortality are not far from being Christians: for it is hard to conceive that a man, fully conscious eternal pain or happiness will certainly be his lot, should not earnestly and impartially inquire after the

surest means of escaping one, and securing the other: and of such an earnest and impartial inquiry I well know the consequence.

Here, therefore, in proof of this most fundamental truth, some plain arguments are offered; arguments derived from principles which infidels admit in common with believers; arguments which appear to me altogether irresistible, and such as, I am satisfied, will have great weight with all who give themselves the small trouble of looking seriously into their own bosoms, and of observing, with any tolerable degree of attention, what daily passes round about them in the world. If some arguments shall here occur which others have declined, they are submitted, with all deference, to better judgments, in this, of all points, the most important! for as to the being of a God, that is no longer disputed; but it is undisputed for this reason only, viz. because where the least pretence to reason is admitted, it must for ever be indisputable: and, of consequence, no man can be betrayed into a dispute of that nature by vanity, which has a principal share in animating our modern combatants against other articles of our belief.

SHE * (for I know not yet her name in heaven)
Not early, like Narcissa, left the scene,
Nor sudden, like Philander. What avail?
This seeming mitigation but inflames;
This fancy'd med'cine heightens the disease.

* Referring to Night the Fifth.

The longer known, the clofer ftill fhe grew,
And gradual parting is a gradual death.
'Tis the grim tyrant's engine which extorts,
By tardy preffure's ftill-increafing weight,
From hardeft hearts confeffion of diftrefs.
O the long dark approach, thro' years of pain,
Death's gall'ry! (might I dare to call it fo)
With difmal doubt and fable terror hung,
Sick Hope's pale lamp its only glimm'ring ray:
There Fate my melancholy walk ordain'd,
Forbid Self-love itfelf to flatter there.
How oft' I gaz'd, prophetically fad!
How oft' I faw her dead, while yet in fmiles!
In fmiles fhe funk her grief to leffen mine:
She fpoke me comfort, and increas'd my pain.
Like pow'rful armies trenching at a town,
By flow and filent, but refiftlefs, fap,
In his pale progrefs gently gaining ground,
Death urg'd his deadly fiege; in fpite of art,
Of all the balmy bleffings Nature lends
To fuccour frail humanity. Ye Stars!
(Not now firft made familiar to my fight)
And thou, O Moon! bear witnefs; many a night
He tore the pillow from beneath my head,
Ty'd down my fore attention to the fhock,
By ceafelefs depredations on a life
Dearer than that he left me. Dreadful poft
Of obfervation! darker ev'ry hour!

Leſs dread the day that drove me to the brink,
And pointed at eternity below,
When my ſoul ſhudder'd at futurity;
When, on a moment's point, the important dye
Of life and death ſpun doubtful, ere it fell,
And turn'd up life, my title to more woe.
But why more woe? more comfort let it be.
Nothing is dead but that which wiſh'd to die;
Nothing is dead but wretchedneſs and pain;
Nothing is dead but what incumber'd, gall'd,
Block'd up the paſs, and barr'd from real life.
Where dwells that wiſh moſt ardent of the wiſe?
Too dark the ſun to ſee it; higheſt ſtars
Too low to reach it; Death, great Death alone,
O'er ſtars and ſun triumphant, lands us there.
Nor dreadful our tranſition, tho' the mind,
An artiſt at creating ſelf-alarms,
Rich in expedients for inquietude,
Is prone to paint it dreadful. Who can take
Death's portrait true? the tyrant never ſat.
Our ſketch all random ſtrokes, conjecture all;
Cloſe ſhuts the grave, nor tells one ſingle tale.
Death and his image riſing in the brain
Bear faint reſemblance; never are alike;
Fear ſhakes the pencil; Fancy loves exceſs,
Dark Ignorance is laviſh of her ſhades;
And theſe the formidable picture draw.
But grant the worſt, 'tis paſt; new proſpects riſe,

And drop a veil eternal o'er her tomb.
Far other views our contemplation claim,
Views that o'erpay the rigours of our life;
Views that ſuſpend our agonies in death.
Wrapt in the thought of immortality,
Wrapt in the ſingle, the triumphant thought!
Long life might lapſe, age unperceiv'd come on,
And find the ſoul unſated with her theme.
Its Nature, Proof, Importance, fire my ſong.
O that my ſong could emulate my ſoul!
Like her immortal. No!—the ſoul diſdains
A mark ſo mean; far nobler hope inflames;
If endleſs ages can outweigh an hour,
Let not the laurel, but the palm, inſpire.
  Thy nature, Immortality! who knows?
And yet who knows it not? it is but life
In ſtronger thread of brighter colour ſpun,
And ſpun for ever; dipt by cruel Fate
In Stygian dye, how black, how brittle, here!
How ſhort our correſpondence with the ſun!
And while it laſts inglorious! our beſt deeds
How wanting in their weight! our higheſt joys
Small cordials to ſupport us in our pain,
And give us ſtrength to ſuffer. But how great
To mingle int'reſts, converſe, amities,
With all the ſons of Reaſon, ſcatter'd wide
Thro' habitable ſpace, wherever borne,
Howe'er endow'd! to live free citizens

Of univerſal Nature! to lay hold,
By more than feeble faith, on the Supreme!
To call heav'n's rich unfathomable mines
(Mines which ſupport archangels in their ſtate)
Our own! to riſe in ſcience as in bliſs,
Initiate in the ſecrets of the ſkies!
To read creation; read its mighty plan
In the bare boſom of the Deity!
The plan and execution to collate!
To ſee, before each glance of piercing thought,
All cloud, all ſhadow, blown remote, and leave
No myſtery—but that of love divine,
Which lifts us on the ſeraph's flaming wing,
From earth's aceldama, this field of blood,
Of inward anguiſh, and of outward ill,
From darkneſs and from duſt, to ſuch a ſcene!
Love's element! true joy's illuſtrious home!
From earth's ſad contraſt (now deplor'd) more fair!
What exquiſite viciſſitude of fate!
Bleſs'd abſolution of our blackeſt hour!
  Lorenzo! theſe are thoughts that make man man,
The wiſe illumine, aggrandize the great.
How great, (while yet we tread the kindred clod,
And ev'ry moment fear to ſink beneath
The clod we tread, ſoon trodden by our ſons)
How great, in the wild whirl of time's purſuits,
To ſtop, and pauſe; involv'd in high preſage,
Thro' the long viſto of a thouſand years,

To ſtand contemplating our diſtant ſelves,
As in a magnifying mirror ſeen,
Enlarg'd, ennobled, elevate, divine!
To propheſy our own futurities!
To gaze in thought on what all thought tranſcends!
To talk, with fellow-candidates, of joys
As far beyond conception as deſert,
Ourſelves th' aſtoniſh'd talkers and the tale!
 Lorenzo! ſwells thy boſom at the thought?
The ſwell becomes thee: 'tis an honeſt pride.
Revere thyſelf;—and yet thyſelf deſpiſe.
His nature no man can o'er-rate, and none
Can under-rate his merit. Take good heed,
Nor there be modeſt where thou ſhouldſt be proud;
That almoſt univerſal error ſhun.
How juſt our pride, when we behold thoſe heights!
Not thoſe Ambition paints in air, but thoſe
Reaſon points out, and ardent Virtue gains,
And angels emulate. Our pride how juſt!
When mount we? when theſe ſhackles caſt? when quit
This cell of the creation? this ſmall neſt,
Stuck in a corner of the univerſe,
Wrapt up in fleecy cloud and fine-ſpun air?
Fine-ſpun to ſenſe, but groſs and feculent
To ſouls celeſtial; ſouls ordain'd to breathe
Ambroſial gales, and drink a purer ſky;
Greatly triumphant on Time's farther ſhore,
Where Virtue reigns, enrich'd with full arrears,

While Pomp imperial begs an alms of Peace.
  In empire high, or in proud ſcience deep,
Ye born of Earth! on what can you confer,
With half the dignity, with half the gain,
The guſt, the glow, of rational delight,
As on this theme, which angels praiſe and ſhare?
Man's fates and favours are a theme in heav'n.
  What wretched repetition cloys us here!
What periodic potions for the ſick!
Diſtemper'd bodies! and diſtemper'd minds!
In an eternity what ſcenes ſhall ſtrike!
Adventures thicken! novelties ſurpriſe!
What webs of wonder ſhall unravel there!
What full day pour on all the paths of heav'n,
And light th'Almighty's footſteps in the deep!
How ſhall the bleſſed day of our diſcharge
Unwind, at once, the labyrinths of Fate,
And ſtraighten its inextricable maze!
  If inextinguiſhable thirſt in man
To know, how rich, how full, our banquet there!
There, not the moral world alone unfolds;
The world material, lately ſeen in ſhades,
And in thoſe ſhades by fragments only ſeen,
And ſeen thoſe fragments by the lab'ring eye,
Unbroken, then, illuſtrious, and entire,
Its ample ſphere, its univerſal frame,
In full dimenſions, ſwells to the ſurvey,
And enters, at one glance, the raviſh'd ſight.

From ſome ſuperior point, (where who can tell?
Suffice it 'tis a point where gods reſide)
How ſhall the ſtranger man's illumin'd eye,
In the vaſt ocean of unbounded ſpace,
Behold an infinite of floating worlds
Divide the cryſtal waves of ether pure,
In endleſs voyage without port? The leaſt
Of theſe diſſeminated orbs how great!
Great as they are, what numbers theſe ſurpaſs,
Huge as leviathan to that ſmall race,
Thoſe twinkling multitudes of little life,
He ſwallows unperceiv'd! Stupendous theſe?
Yet what are theſe ſtupendous to the whole?
As particles, as atoms ill-perceiv'd;
As circulating globules in our veins;
So vaſt the plan. Fecundity divine!
Exub'rant Source! perhaps I wrong thee ſtill.
  If admiration is a ſource of joy,
What tranſport hence! yet this the leaſt in heav'n.
What this to that illuſtrious robe He wears,
Who toſs'd this maſs of wonders from his hand,
A ſpecimen, an earneſt, of his power?
'Tis to that glory, whence all glory flows,
As the mead's meaneſt flow'ret to the ſun,
Which gave it birth. But what this ſun of heav'n?
This bliſs ſupreme of the ſupremely bleſt?
Death, only death, the queſtion can reſolve.
By death cheap bought th' ideas of our joy;

The bare ideas! ſolid happineſs
So diſtant from its ſhadow chas'd below.
  And chaſe we ſtill the phantom thro' the fire,
O'er bog, and brake, and precipice, till death?
And toil we ſtill for ſublunary pay?
Defy the dangers of the field and flood,
Or, ſpider-like, ſpin out our precious all,
Our more than vitals ſpin, (if no regard
To great futurity) in curious webs
Of ſubtle thought and exquiſite deſign,
(Fine network of the brain!) to catch a fly!
The momentary buz of vain renown!
A name! a mortal immortality!
  Or (meaner ſtill!) inſtead of graſping air,
For ſordid lucre plunge we in the mire?
Drudge, ſweat, thro' ev'ry ſhame, for ev'ry gain,
For vile contaminating traſh; throw up
Our hope in heav'n, our dignity with man,
And deify the dirt matur'd to gold?
Ambition, Av'rice, the two dæmons theſe
Which goad thro' ev'ry ſlough our human herd,
Hard-travell'd from the cradle to the grave.
How low the wretches ſtoop! how ſteep they climb!
Theſe dæmons burn mankind, but moſt poſſeſs
Lorenzo's boſom, and turn out the ſkies.
  Is it in time to hide eternity?
And why not in an atom on the ſhore
To cover ocean? or a mote the ſun?

Glory and wealth! have they this blinding pow'r?
What if to them I prove Lorenzo blind?
Would it ſurpriſe thee? be thou then ſurpris'd;
Thou neither know'ſt: their nature learn from me.
Mark well, as foreign as theſe ſubjects ſeem,
What cloſe connexion ties them to my theme.
Firſt, what is true ambition? The purſuit
Of glory nothing leſs than man can ſhare.
Were they as vain as gaudy-minded man,
As flatulent with fumes of ſelf-applauſe,
Their arts and conqueſts animals might boaſt,
And claim their laurel crowns as well as we,
But not celeſtial. Here we ſtand alone,
As in our form, diſtinct, pre-eminent:
If prone in thought, our ſtature is our ſhame,
And man ſhould bluſh his forehead meets the ſkies.
The viſible and preſent are for brutes;
A ſlender portion, and a narrow bound!
Theſe reaſon, with an energy divine,
O'erleaps, and claims the future and unſeen
The vaſt unſeen! the future fathomleſs!
When the great ſoul buoys up to this high point,
Leaving groſs Nature's ſediments below.
Then, and then only, Adam's offspring quits
The ſage and hero of the fields and woods,
Aſſerts his rank, and riſes into man.
This is ambition; this is human fire.
Can parts or place (two bold pretenders!) make
Lorenzo great, and pluck him from the throng?

Genius and art, ambition's boaſted wings,
Our boaſt but ill deſerve: a feeble aid!
Dedalian engin'ry! If theſe alone
Aſſiſt our flight, Fame's flight is Glory's fall.
Heart-merit wanting, mount we ne'er ſo high,
Our height is but the gibbet of our name.
A celebrated wretch when I behold,
When I behold a genius bright and baſe,
Of tow'ring talents and terreſtrial aims,
Methinks I ſee, as thrown from her high ſphere,
The glorious fragments of a ſoul immortal,
With rubbiſh mix'd, and glitt'ring in the duſt:
Struck at the ſplendid melancholy ſight,
At once compaſſion ſoft, and envy, riſe———
But wherefore envy? talents angel-bright,
If wanting worth, are ſhining inſtruments
In falſe Ambition's hand, to finiſh faults
Illuſtrious, and give Infamy renown.
Great ill is an achievement of great pow'rs.
Plain ſenſe but rarely leads us far aſtray.
Reaſon the means, affections chuſe our end.
Means have no merit, if our end amiſs.
If wrong our hearts, our heads are right in vain.
What is a Pelham's head to Pelham's heart?
Hearts are proprietors of all applauſe.
Right ends and means make wiſdom. Worldly-wiſe
Is but half-witted at its higheſt praiſe.
Let genius, then, deſpair to make thee great,

Nor flatter ſtation. What is ſtation high?
'Tis a proud mendicant; it boaſts and begs;
It begs an alms of homage from the throng,
And oft' the throng denies its charity.
Monarchs and Miniſters are awful names;
Whoever wear them challenge our devoir.
Religion, public order, both exact
External homage and a ſupple knee,
To beings pompouſly ſet up, to ſerve
The meaneſt ſlave: all more is Merit's due,
Her ſacred and inviolable right,
Nor ever paid the monarch, but the man.
Our hearts ne'er bow but to ſuperior worth,
Nor ever fail of their allegiance there.
Fools, indeed, drop the man in their account,
And vote the mantle into majeſty.
Let the ſmall ſavage boaſt his ſilver fur,
His royal robe unborrow'd, and unbought,
His own, deſcending fairly from his ſires;
Shall man be proud to wear his livery,
And ſouls in ermin ſcorn a ſoul without?
Can place or leſſen us or aggrandize?
Pygmies are pygmies ſtill, tho' perch'd on Alps,
And pyramids are pyramids in vales.
Each man makes his own ſtature, builds himſelf.
Virtue alone outbuilds the pyramids;
Her monuments ſhall laſt when Egypt's fall.
    Of theſe ſure truths doſt thou demand the cauſe?

The cauſe is lodg'd in immortality.
Hear, and aſſent. Thy boſom burns for pow'r;
What ſtation charms thee? I'll inſtall thee there;
'Tis thine. And art thou greater than before?
Then thou before waſt ſomething leſs than man.
Has thy new poſt betray'd thee into pride?
That treach'rous pride betrays thy dignity;
That pride defames humanity, and calls
The being mean which ſtaffs or ſtrings can raiſe:
That pride, like hooded hawks, in darkneſs ſoars,
From blindneſs bold, and tow'ring to the ſkies.
'Tis born of Ignorance, which knows not man:
An angel's ſecond, nor his ſecond long.
A Nero, quitting his imperial throne,
And courting glory from the tinkling ſtring,
But faintly ſhadows an immortal ſoul,
With empire's ſelf to pride or rapture fir'd.
If nobler motives miniſter no cure,
Ev'n vanity forbids thee to be vain.
  High worth is elevated place: 'tis more,
It makes the poſt ſtand candidate for thee;
Makes more than monarchs, makes an honeſt man;
Tho' no Exchequer it commands, 'tis wealth;
And tho' it wears no ribband, 'tis renown:
Renown that would not quit thee tho' diſgrac'd,
Nor leave thee pendant on a maſter's ſmile.
Other ambition Nature interdicts;
Nature proclaims it moſt abſurd in man,

By pointing at his origin and end;
Milk and a ſwathe, at firſt, his whole demand;
His whole domain, at laſt, a turf or ſtone;
To whom, between, a world may ſeem too ſmall.
Souls truly great dart forward on the wing
Of juſt ambition, to the grand reſult,
The curtain's fall; there ſee the buſkin'd chief
Unſhod behind this momentary ſcene,
Reduc'd to his own ſtature, low or high,
As vice or virtue ſinks him, or ſublimes;
And laugh at this fantaſtic mummery,
This antic prelude of groteſque events,
Where dwarfs are often ſtilted, and betray
A littleneſs of ſoul by worlds o'er-run,
And nations laid in blood. Dread ſacrifice
To Chriſtian pride! which had with horror ſhock'd
The darkeſt Pagans, offer'd to their gods.
O thou Moſt Chriſtian! enemy to peace!
Again in arms? again provoking Fate?
That prince, and that alone, is truly great,
Who draws the ſword reluctant, gladly ſheaths;
On empire builds what empire far outweighs,
And makes his throne a ſcaffold to the ſkies.
Why this ſo rare? becauſe forgot of all
The day of death, that venerable day
Which ſits as judge; that day which ſhall pronounce
On all our days, abſolve them, or condemn.
Lorenzo! never ſhut thy thought againſt it;

Be levees ne'er ſo full, afford it room,
And give it audience in the cabinet.
That friend conſulted, flatteries apart,
Will tell thee fair if thou art great or mean.
  To dote on aught may leave us, or be left,
Is that ambition? then let flames deſcend,
Point to the centre their inverted ſpires,
And learn humiliation from a ſoul
Which boaſts her lineage from celeſtial fire.
Yet theſe are they the world pronounces wiſe;
The world, which cancels Nature's right and wrong,
And caſts new wiſdom: ev'n the grave man lends
His ſolemn face to countenance the coin.
Wiſdom for parts is madneſs for the whole.
This ſtamps the paradox, and gives us leave
To call the wiſeſt weak, the richeſt poor,
The moſt ambitious unambitious, mean,
In triumph mean, and abject on a throne.
Nothing can make it leſs than mad in man
To put forth all his ardour, all his art,
And give his ſoul her full unbounded flight,
But reaching him who gave her wings to fly.
When blind Ambition quite miſtakes her road,
And downward pores for that which ſhines above,
Subſtantial happineſs and true renown,
Then, like an idiot gazing on the brook,
We leap at ſtars, and faſten in the mud;
At glory graſp, and ſink in infamy.

Ambition! pow'rful fource of good and ill!
Thy ftrength in man, like length of wing in birds,
When difengag'd from earth, with greater eafe,
And fwifter flight, tranfports us to the fkies:
By toys entangled, or in guilt bemir'd,
It turns a curfe; it is our chain and fcourge,
In this dark dungeon, where confin'd we lie,
Clofe-grated by the fordid bars of fenfe,
All profpect of eternity fhut out,
And but for execution ne'er fet free.
With error in ambition juftly charg'd,
Find we Lorenzo wifer in his wealth?
What if thy rental I reform, and draw
An inventory new to fet thee right?
Where thy true treafure? Gold fays, "Not in me:"
And, "Not in me," the Di'mond. Gold is poor;
India's infolvent: feek it in thyfelf;
Seek in thy naked felf, and find it there;
In being fo defcended, form'd, endow'd;
Sky-born, fky-guided, fky-returning race!
Erect, immortal, rational, divine!
In fenfes which inherit earth and heav'ns:
Enjoy the various riches Nature yields;
Far nobler! give the riches they enjoy;
Give tafte to fruits, and harmony to groves;
Their radiant beams to gold, and gold's bright fire;
Take in, at once, the landfcape of the world,
At a fmall inlet, which a grain might clofe,

And half create the wondrous world they ſee.
Our ſenſes, as our reaſon, are divine.
But for the magic organ's pow'rful charm,
Earth were a rude uncolour'd chaos ſtill.
Objects are but th' occaſion, ours th' exploit;
Ours is the cloth, the pencil, and the paint,
Which Nature's admirable picture draws,
And beautifies creation's ample dome.
Like Milton's Eve, when gazing on the lake,
Man makes the matchleſs image man admires.
Say then, ſhall man, his thoughts all ſent abroad,
Superior wonders in himſelf forgot,
His admiration waſte on objects round,
When Heav'n makes him the ſoul of all he ſees?
Abſurd! not rare! ſo great, ſo mean, is man.
  What wealth in ſenſes ſuch as theſe! what wealth
In fancy, fir'd to form a fairer ſcene
Than ſenſe ſurveys! in Mem'ry's firm record,
Which, ſhould it periſh, could this world recall
From the dark ſhadows of o'erwhelming years!
In colours freſh, originally bright,
Preſerve its portrait, and report its fate!
What wealth in intellect, that ſov'reign pow'r!
Which ſenſe and fancy ſummons to the bar;
Interrogates, approves, or reprehends;
And from the maſs thoſe underlings import,
From their materials ſifted and refin'd,
And in Truth's balance accurately weigh'd,

Forms art and ſcience, government and law,
The ſolid baſis, and the beauteous frame,
The vitals, and the grace, of civil life!
And manners (ſad exception!) ſet aſide,
Strikes out, with maſter hand, a copy fair
Of his idea, whoſe indulgent thought
Long, long ere Chaos teem'd, plann'd human bliſs.
What wealth in ſouls that ſoar, dive, range around,
Diſdaining limit or from place or time,
And hear, at once, in thought extenſive, hear
Th'Almighty Fiat, and the trumpet's ſound!
Bold on creation's outſide walk, and view
What was, and is, and more than e'er ſhall be;
Commanding, with omnipotence of thought,
Creations new in Fancy's field to riſe!
Souls that can graſp whate'er th'Almighty made,
And wander wild thro' things impoſſible!
What wealth in faculties of endleſs growth,
In quenchleſs paſſions violent to crave,
In liberty to chuſe, in pow'r to reach,
And in duration (how thy riches riſe!)
Duration to perpetuate—boundleſs bliſs!
Aſk you what pow'r reſides in feeble man
That bliſs to gain? Is virtue's, then, unknown?
Virtue! our preſent peace, our future prize.
Man's unprecarious, natural eſtate,
Improveable at will, in virtue lies;
Its tenure ſure, its income is divine.

High-built abundance, heap on heap! for what?
To breed new wants, and beggar us the more,
Then make a richer ſcramble for the throng?
Soon as this feeble pulſe, which leaps ſo long,
Almoſt by miracle, is tir'd with play,
Like rubbiſh, from diſploding engines thrown,
Our magazines of hoarded trifles fly;
Fly diverſe; fly to foreigners, to foes;
New maſters court, and call the former fool,
(How juſtly!) for dependence on their ſtay.
Wide ſcatter, firſt, our playthings, then our duſt.
Doſt court abundance for the ſake of peace?
Learn, and lament thy ſelf-defeated ſcheme.
Riches enable to be richer ſtill,
And richer ſtill what mortal can reſiſt?
Thus wealth (a cruel taſkmaſter!) enjoins
New toils, ſucceeding toils, an endleſs train!
And murders peace, which taught it firſt to ſhine.
The poor are half as wretched as the rich,
Whoſe proud and painful privilege it is
At once to bear a double load of woe,
To feel the ſtings of envy and of want,
Outrageous want! both Indies cannot cure.
A competence is vital to content;
Much wealth is corpulence, if not diſeaſe:
Sick, or incumber'd, is our happineſs.
A competence is all we can enjoy.
O be content; where Heav'n can give no more!

More, like a flaſh of water from a lock,
Quickens our ſpirit's movement for an hour,
But ſoon its force is ſpent, nor riſe our joys
Above our native temper's common ſtream.
Hence diſappointment lurks in ev'ry prize,
As bees in flow'rs, and ſtings us with ſucceſs.
The rich man, who denies it, proudly feigns,
Nor knows the wiſe are privy to the lie.
Much learning ſhews how little mortals know;
Much wealth, how little worldlings can enjoy:
At beſt it babies us with endleſs toys,
And keeps us children till we drop to duſt.
As monkeys at a mirror ſtand amaz'd,
They fail to find what they ſo plainly ſee:
Thus men, in ſhining riches, ſee the face
Of Happineſs, nor know it is a ſhade;
But gaze, and touch, and peep, and peep again,
And wiſh, and wonder it is abſent ſtill.
How few can reſcue opulence from want!
Who lives to Nature rarely can be poor;
Who lives to fancy never can rich.
Poor is the man in debt; the man of gold,
In debt to Fortune, trembles at her pow'r:
The man of reaſon ſmiles at her and death.
O what a patrimony this! a being
Of ſuch inherent ſtrength and majeſty,
Not worlds poſſeſt can raiſe it; worlds deſtroy'd
Can't injure; which holds on its glorious courſe

When thine, O Nature! ends; too bleſt to mourn
Creation's obſequies. What treaſure this!
The monarch is a beggar to the man.
  Immortal! ages paſt, yet nothing gone!
Morn without eve! a race without a goal!
Unſhorten'd by progreſſion infinite!
Futurity for ever future! life
Beginning ſtill where computation ends!
'Tis the deſcription of a deity!
'Tis the deſcription of the meaneſt ſlave!
The meaneſt ſlave dares then Lorenzo ſcorn?
The meaneſt ſlave thy ſov'reign glory ſhares.
Proud Youth! faſtidious of the lower world!
Man's lawful pride includes humility;
Stoops to the loweſt; is too great to find
Inferiors; all immortal! brothers all!
Proprietors eternal of thy love.
  Immortal! what can ſtrike the ſenſe ſo ſtrong,
As this the ſoul? it thunders to the thought,
Reaſon amazes, gratitude o'erwhelms:
No more we ſlumber on the brink of Fate;
Rous'd at the ſound, th' exulting ſoul aſcends,
And breathes her native air, an air that feeds
Ambitions high, and fans ethereal fires;
Quick-kindles all that is divine within us,
Nor leaves one loit'ring thought beneath the ſtars.
  Has not Lorenzo's boſom caught the flame?
Immortal! were but one immortal, how

Would others envy! how would thrones adore!
Becauſe 'tis common, is the bleſſing loſt?
How this ties up the bounteous hand of Heav'n!
O vain, vain, vain, all elſe! eternity!
A glorious and a needful refuge that,
From vile impriſonment in abject views.
'Tis immortality, 'tis that alone,
Amid life's pains, abaſements, emptineſs,
The ſoul can comfort, elevate, and fill:
That only, and that amply, this performs;
Lifts us above life's pains, her joys above;
Their terror thoſe, and theſe their luſtre loſe;
Eternity depending covers all;
Eternity depending all achieves;
Sets earth at diſtance; caſts her into ſhades;
Blends her diſtinctions; abrogates her pow'rs;
The low, the lofty, joyous, and ſevere,
Fortune's dread frowns, and faſcinating ſmiles,
Make one promiſcuous and neglected heap,
The man beneath; if I may call him man,
Whom immortality's full force inſpires.
Nothing terreſtrial touches his high thought;
Suns ſhine unſeen, and thunders roll unheard,
By minds quite conſcious of their high deſcent,
Their preſent province, and their future prize;
Divinely darting upward ev'ry wiſh,
Warm on the wing, in glorious abſence loſt!
Doubt you this truth? why labours your belief?

If earth's whole orb, by ſome due-diſtant eye
Were ſeen at once, her tow'ring Alps would ſink,
And levell'd Atlas leave an even ſphere.
Thus earth, and all that earthly minds admire,
Is ſwallow'd in Eternity's vaſt round.
To that ſtupendous view, when ſouls awake,
So large of late, ſo mountainous to man,
Time's toys ſubſide, and equal all below.
  Enthuſiaſtic this? then all are weak
But rank enthuſiaſts. To this godlike height
Some ſouls have ſoar'd, or martyrs ne'er had bled:
And all may do what has by man been done.
Who, beaten by theſe ſublunary ſtorms,
Boundleſs, interminable joys can weigh
Unraptur'd, unexalted, uninflam'd?
What ſlave unbleſs'd, who from to-morrow's dawn
Expects an empire? he forgets his chain,
And, thron'd in thought, his abſent ſceptre waves.
  And what a ſceptre waits us! what a throne!
Her own immenſe appointments to compute,
Or comprehend her high prerogatives,
In this her dark minority, how toils,
How vainly pants, the human ſoul divine!
Too great the bounty ſeems for earthly joy;
What heart but trembles at ſo ſtrange a bliſs?
  In ſpite of all the truths the Muſe has ſung,
Ne'er to be priz'd enough! enough revolv'd!
Are there who wrap the world ſo cloſe about them,

They ſee no farther than the clouds, and dance
On heedleſs Vanity's fantaſtic toe,
Till, ſtumbling at a ſtraw, in their career,
Headlong they plunge, where end both dance and ſong?
Are there, Lorenzo? is it poſſible?
Are there on earth (let me not call them men)
Who lodge a ſoul immortal in their breaſts,
Unconſcious as the mountain of its ore,
Or rock of its ineſtimable gem?
When rocks ſhall melt, and mountains vaniſh, theſe
Shall know their treaſure; treaſure then no more.
  Are there (ſtill more amazing!) who reſiſt
The riſing thought? who ſmother, in its birth,
The glorious truth? who ſtruggle to be brutes?
Who thro' this boſom-barrier burſt their way,
And, with revers'd ambition, ſtrive to ſink?
Who labour downwards thro' th' oppoſing powers
Of inſtinct, reaſon, and the world againſt them,
To diſmal hopes, and ſhelter in the ſhock
Of endleſs night? night darker than the grave's?
Who fight the proofs of immortality?
With horrid zeal, and execrable arts,
Work all their engines, level their black fires,
To blot from man this attribute divine,
(Than vital blood far dearer to the wiſe)
Blaſphemers, and rank Atheiſts to themſelves?
  To contradict them, ſee all Nature riſe!
What object, what event, the moon beneath,

PAGE NO-181,182 MISSING IN ORIGINAL

Leſs privileg'd than grain on which he feeds?
Is man, in whom alone is pow'r to prize
The bliſs of being, or, with previous pain,
Deplore its period, by the ſpleen of Fate
Severely doom'd Death's ſingle unredeem'd?
  If Nature's revolution ſpeaks aloud
In her gradation, hear her louder ſtill.
Look Nature through, 'tis neat gradation all.
By what minute degrees her ſcale aſcends!
Each middle nature join'd at each extreme,
To that above it join'd, to that beneath.
Parts into parts reciprocally ſhot,
Abhor divorce. What love of union reigns!
Here dormant matter waits a call to life;
Half-life, half-death, join there: here life and ſenſe,
There ſenſe from reaſon ſteals a glimm'ring ray:
Reaſon ſhines out in man. But how preſerv'd
The chain unbroken upward, to the realms
Of incorporeal life? thoſe realms of bliſs
Where Death hath no dominion? Grant a make
Half-mortal, half-immortal; earthy part,
And part ethereal: grant the ſoul of man
Eternal, or in man the ſeries ends.
Wide yawns the gap; connexion is no more;
Check'd Reaſon halts; her next ſtep wants ſupport;
Striving to climb, ſhe tumbles from her ſcheme
A ſcheme Analogy pronounc'd ſo true;
Analogy! man's ſureſt guide below.

Thus far all Nature calls on thy belief;
And will Lorenzo, careless of the call,
False attestation on all Nature charge,
Rather than violate his league with Death?
Renounce his reason, rather than renounce
The dust belov'd, and run the risk of heav'n?
O what indignity to deathless souls!
What treason to the majesty of man!
Of man immortal! Hear the lofty style:
"If so decreed, th' Almighty will be done.
"Let earth dissolve, yon pond'rous orbs descend,
"And grind us into dust. The soul is safe;
"The man emerges; mounts above the wreck,
"As tow'ring flame from Nature's fun'ral pyre;
"O'er devastation, as a gainer, smiles;
"His charter, his inviolable rights,
"Well-pleas'd to learn from Thunder's impotence,
"Death's pointless darts, and Hell's defeated storms."
But these chimeras touch not thee, Lorenzo!
The glories of the world thy sev'nfold shield.
Other ambition than of crowns in air,
And superlunary felicities,
Thy bosom warm. I'll cool it, if I can,
And turn those glories that inchant against thee.
What ties thee to this life, proclaims the next.
If wise, the cause that wounds thee is thy cure.
Come, my Ambitious! let us mount together
(To mount Lorenzo never can refuse)
And from the clouds, where Pride delights to dwell,

Look down on earth.—What ſeeſt thou? wondrous things!
Terreſtrial wonders, that eclipſe the ſkies.
What lengths of labour'd lands! what loaded ſeas!
Loaded by man for pleaſure, wealth, or war!
Seas, winds, and planets, into ſervice brought,
His art acknowledge, and prompte his ends.
Nor can th' eternal rocks his will withſtand:
What levell'd mountains! and what lifted vales!
O'er vales and mountains ſumptuous cities ſwell,
And gild our landſcape with their glitt'ring ſpires.
Some 'mid the wond'ring waves majeſtic riſe,
And Neptune holds a mirror to their charms.
Far greater ſtill! (what cannot mortal might?)
See wide dominions raviſh'd from the deep!
The narrow'd deep with indignation foams.
Or ſouthward turn, to delicate and grand,
The finer arts there ripen in the ſun.
How the tall temples, as to meet their gods,
Aſcend the ſkies! the proud triumphal arch
Shews us half heav'n beneath its ample bend.
High thro' mid air, here ſtreams are taught to flow;
Whole rivers there, laid by in baſons, ſleep.
Here plains turn oceans; there vaſt oceans join
Thro' kingdoms channell'd deep from ſhore to ſhore,
And chang'd creation takes its face from man.
Beats thy brave breaſt for formidable ſcenes,
Where fame and empire wait upon the ſword?
See fields in blood; hear naval thunders riſe;
Britannia's voice! that awes the world to peace.

How yon enormous mole projecting breaks
The mid-ſea, furious waves! their roar amidſt
Out-ſpeaks the Deity, and ſays, "O Main!
"Thus far, nor farther; new reſtraints obey."
Earth's diſembowel'd! meaſur'd are the ſkies!
Stars are detected in their deep receſs!
Creation widens! vanquiſh'd Nature yields!
Her ſecrets are extorted! art prevails!
What monument of genius, ſpirit, power!
And now, Lorenzo! raptur'd at this ſcene,
Whoſe glories render heav'n ſuperfluous! ſay,
Whoſe footſteps theſe?—Immortals have been here.
Could leſs than ſouls immortal this have done?
Earth's cover'd o'er with proofs of ſouls immortal;
And proofs of immortality forgot.
To flatter thy grand foible, I confeſs
Theſe are Ambition's works; and theſe are great:
But this, the leaſt immortal ſouls can do,
Tranſcend them all.—But what can theſe tranſcend?
Doſt aſk me what?—one ſigh for the diſtreſt.
What then for Infidels? a deeper ſigh.
'Tis moral grandeur makes the mighty man.
How little they who think aught great below?
All our ambitions death defeats but one,
And that it crowns.—Here ceaſe we; but, ere long,
More pow'rful proof ſhall take the field againſt thee,
Stronger than death, and ſmiling at the tomb.

End of Night Sixth.

CONTENTS.

	Page
The life of the Author,	5
Recommendatory verses,	16

THE COMPLAINT: OR, NIGHT-THOUGHTS.

Night I. On Life, Death, and Immortality,	21
Night II. On Time, Death, Friendship,	39
Night III. Narcissa,	65
Night IV. The Christian Triumph,	85
Night V. The Relapse,	116
Night VI. The Infidel Reclaimed. Part I.	155

From the APOLLO PRESS,
by the MARTINS,
Sept. 22. 1777.

END OF VOLUME FIRST.